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NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

The League's Business

An Open Letter to League Members

IF YOU'RE interested in the shape of things to come for local government—if you're interested in:

The probable fate of your community in the post-war world;

Why its existence is important in the democratic process;

How to teach youngsters, twenty-one-year-olds, and adults to live in a democracy;

How your community could function more effectively in the defense program.

Then—you will mark on your calendar **November 17, 18, and 19,** as dates when you expect to be in **St. Louis** for the National Municipal League's forty-seventh annual **Conference on Government.**

Some of the answers to these questions will be provided by George H. Gallup, founder and director of the American Institute of Public Opinion; Charles P. Taft, assistant director of the Office of Coördinator of Health, Welfare, and Related Defense Activities; C. A. Dykstra, president of the University of Wisconsin; Hal Luhnow, Kansas City civic leader; Howard E. Wilson, Harvard University; Alonzo G. Grace, Connecticut's commissioner of education; Thomas H. Reed, municipal consultant—to mention some of those who already have accepted invitations to appear on the conference program.

To whet your appetite further for what we think is going to be an outstanding League conference, we can promise you discussion of such subjects as reorganizing our public schools, making the merit system work, city growing pains, making your vote count, modernizing a state constitution and getting it adopted, the community's responsibility for settling labor problems, streamlining your county.

This is only a sketchy hint of the fulsome and interesting plans now nearing completion. The newly-revised *Model State Constitution* will make its bow at the conference to demonstrate to our states how they can lift themselves from the constitutional stagnation with which most of them are plagued. Members of the League's Committee on State Government will show how this committee has worked out solutions of problems which face every state. The conference is expected also to serve as a starting point for an educational campaign in Missouri leading to a vote on the question of whether that state's constitution should be revised.

Meeting with the League, as usual, will be the Proportional Representation League and the National Association of Civic Secretaries.

We will look forward to seeing you Monday noon, November 17, at the Statler Hotel in St. Louis, when Immediate Past President Dykstra will sound the keynote for the conference.

HOWARD P. JONES, *Secretary*

National Municipal Review
Editorial Comment

Let's End the Petition Abuses

NEITHER public indignation nor threat of vigorous prosecution seems likely to follow the recent discovery of widespread irregularities in the circulation of petitions in the city of New York.[1]

The professional politician seems more annoyed than embarrassed or repentant. The various candidates involved are mildly surprised that they should be "picked on." They say they didn't know much about what happened, anyway. They had simply turned over the whole problem to people who made it a business to circulate petitions at so much a name. What concern was it of theirs if the circulators sat down with pen and a list of voters in hand instead of doing the job the hard way by going from door to door as the impractical reformers do?

This situation, which is found in some degree in many cities, is a serious threat to the preservation of a democratic self-governing system. The perversion of the processes of free and honest election must be recognized as one of the worst offenses which can be committed against the people and it must be treated as such with appropriate penalties. If public indifference makes severe punishment impossible, then the idea that there is something democratic about our processes is hollow pretense.

To illustrate: political organizations in New York City easily and quickly obtained over five times as many signatures to petitions as they needed to place on the ballot the question of repealing proportional representation as the method of electing the City Council; yet the voters overwhelmingly turned the proposition down. The Citizens' Non-Partisan Committee, on the other hand, had to go through a long, hard struggle to obtain 92,000 signatures to place on the ballot the question of abolishing useless county offices in New York and eliminating the sinecures of many political drones; yet it is predicted by the political organizations themselves that this proposition will be approved by the voters in November.

It is obvious that there is something seriously wrong with current practices in connection with petitions, whether they be initiative measures or nominations, as expressions of the people's desires. The people did not desire to scuttle P.R., but it was possible to produce petitions bearing the names of 278,000 persons to ask that it be scuttled. The people do desire to abolish unneeded offices in the five counties within the city, as they indicated overwhelmingly in their vote of some years ago, but it was difficult to satisfy the minimum requirement for signatures on a petition demanding the right to vote on the question.

Students of the problem have proposed other methods. They have suggested that a comparatively small

[1]See also "Nominating Petitions Contested in New York," p. 596, this issue.

number of voters be permitted to go personally before the board of elections to sign either a referendum or nominating petition in which they are interested. Another system, the "deposit method," has been tried for the nomination of candidates with apparent success in Ireland, Canada, and England, and to some extent in this country. While it requires only a small number of signers, it also requires a deposit of money which the candidate forfeits if he fails to receive a certain minimum number of votes in the election, thus tending to eliminate nuisance candidates.

One way or another, this mockery should be ended, either by putting some teeth into the present system or by discarding it in favor of something which isn't a game of make-believe.

An Old Tradition Gets Crowded

NEW HAMPSHIRE has not quite the smallest population among the states—there are four below it—but it has the largest lower legislative body, surpassing even the prodigious and unwieldy United States House of Representatives. The last census will give New Hampshire's house a membership of 443, eight more than its counterpart in Washington where things get done only when the leaders can stifle debate and whip members into line.

Some states with a less enviable record of effective town government will be at a loss to understand the desirability of a representative for every 600 inhabitants, with smaller towns having a representative once in three years. But now the question is no longer the academic one of large legislative bodies versus small ones. There won't be a room large enough in the state capitol to house the members; indeed, there were more members than seats even before the current increase.

Delaware, half as large, gets along quite well with thirty-five members. Nebraska, three times as large, does even better with a single-house legislature of forty-three members.

New Hampshire would do well to consider scrapping her old tradition in favor of the small, unicameral legislature which has been recommended for years by the *Model State Constitution*.[1] The tradition is not as sensible as it seems. It will be cheaper in the first instance to cut down the representation than to enlarge the chamber; and there is little question but that, in the long run, a single smaller house will not only be more economical but more satisfactory and effective.

[1]The fourth revision of the *Model State Constitution* will be available shortly through the National Municipal League at 50 cents per copy.

Justice Louis D. Brandeis

It is with deepest regret that the League records the death on October 5 of former Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis. Justice Brandeis, one of the founders of the League, was a member of its first executive committee, elected at the organization meeting held in New York City in May 1894.

HOWARD P. JONES, *Secretary*

Kansas City Has Its Chin Up

Miniature brooms worn by tens of thousands symbolic of drastic political house-cleaning organized by Kansas City's woman crusaders.

By STANLEY HIGH

POLITICALLY calloused Kansas City had never seen such a campaign. It was non-professional, nonpartisan, and evangelical. It was fought from the street corners and in the pulpits, through department store windows and at the front door of every Kansas City home. The men had a big hand in what happened. But it was the woman's touch that finished the job.

The miniature brooms which Kansas Cityans wore by the tens of thousands were symbolic of a political house-cleaning the like of which few crime-infested, boss-ridden cities ever experienced. Since then Kansas City has risen in a year and a half from a near-record low among badly governed municipalities to rank with the best.

First call to make the 1940 spring elections a woman's crusade to oust the bosses was issued in November 1939. It was signed by forty Kansas City housewives, who set up their headquarters in a downtown office. An important part of the drive behind this office was supplied by Mrs. George H. Gorton—a grandmother —and Mrs. Russell C. Comer—lately a debutante. Both of them were generals by instinct and crusaders by conviction. Their zeal was contagious.

The women of the city—all ranks of them—began to beat a path to the door. Within a few weeks headquarters had overflowed into numerous other offices and five hundred volunteer typists were working to catalogue the rush—classifying applicants, assigning them to precinct captains, and following through to see that each person got to the job intended for her.

Weeks before the election more than 7,500 women had been enrolled as precinct workers. Every one of them was put through a short course in pavement-pounding, door-bell politics. By election day they had called at every home in Kansas City, given a woman-to-woman explanation of the family importance of the election, and left a campaign broom.

In mid-December store windows suddenly blossomed with decorated Christmas trees, each with a large, alluringly trimmed box beneath it and the inscription: "Let's Give Kansas City a Christmas Present of Good Government." Christmas past, the women displaced the trees with miniature campaign offices—attractive typists earnestly writing campaign letters under the banner: "At Work for Good Government." For the week before Valentine's Day the city was placarded with huge red hearts: "Put a New Heart in the Heart of America."

Election day, women with large brooms picketed in the vicinity of every polling booth. Two hundred automobiles, driven by women, got

the non-auto-owning or forgetful feminine voters to the polls. More women voted than in any other Kansas City election. And the count sealed the doom of the machine. Even in the one ward which the bosses bought, paid for, and won the margin was a narrow one. In every other boss stronghold, the voters—shaken out of their apathy and assured that crooks would not count the vote—hailed their opportunity and turned the rascals out.

This uprising was a result of no overnight awakening. It was a result of twenty years' accumulation of political filth and of almost ten years of off-and-on political crusading.

A Crime-Ridden City

The accumulation of filth had made Kansas City the nation's safest gangster hangout. Its police protected and collected from one of the country's largest red-light districts—a dozen solid blocks of it. Its gambling joints ran wide open. Narcotics were peddled like popcorn from its street corners.

Behind all this was Boss Tom Pendergast. He ran the city government entirely on a fear-and-favor basis. By tens of millions of dollars in illegal tax abatements the machine bribed many of the city's business men into silence. In a variety of other ways—from removing water meters to straight-out strong-arming—the protests of the average citizen were choked off.

The revolt against this stench began in 1932 when a group of young Kansas Cityans started a modest movement to educate the younger generation of voters in "good government." Upshot of this apparently innocuous civic venture was a bipartisan, Citizens-Fusion ticket in the spring election of 1934. In the youth-led campaign that followed plug-uglies, winked at by the police, broke up Fusion meetings and blackjacked its speakers. On election day armed thugs took over the job of intimidation at the polling places. There were innumerable fights and sluggings. Three men were killed.

But Fusion won two places on the eight-man city council and girded its loins for the elections of 1936.

Alarmed, the bosses prepared to go to town in a bigger way than ever. They put Kansas City's voting lists through the padding mill. Thirty-five per cent of the names were fraudulent. The machine won the election "handsomely."

But this time the political stench was so bad and Kansas City's plight so apparent that the federal government took a hand. Successive grand juries—which stayed on the job for two full years—investigated the vote frauds and brought in 280 indictments against the machine faithful. The United States district attorney got 280 convictions.

The big shots temporarily escaped. But in 1938 a federal investigation pinned insurance frauds on them and Tom Pendergast and a choice handful of his men went to federal prison for income tax evasion.

Thereupon the city's crusaders took heart and returned to the wars. Business men, through the Chamber of Commerce and in a number of independent organizations, put the

microscope on the city's finances. They discovered that there was no intelligible budgeting system; no accounting system worthy of the name. A secret payroll was unearthed by which the machine financed its precinct workers from the city treasury. The machine-made city manager was found to have illegally dispensed an "emergency fund" of $8,000,000. A $32,000,000 bond issue, voted in 1932 for badly needed civic improvements, was being used to cover up the machine's current deficits. Tax assessments and collections were determined on a straight-out reward or punishment basis.

Municipal Miracle

Further aroused by these revelations and aggressively backed by the *Kansas City Star,* Kansas City now organized for the 1940 big push. Anti-machine Democrats, the Republican organization, the Charter party —successor to Fusion—and the women's organizations all joined to form the United Campaign Committee. Then, in April 1940, came the spectacular campaign that—with the women's brooms—swept the bosses out. The United Campaign Committee won seven of eight seats on the City Council and elected John B. Gage, its candidate for mayor.

Gage, a mild-mannered lawyer who knew next to nothing about politics, did know the difference between good business and bad. To help him in putting Kansas City on a good-business basis, he commandeered for city manager L. P. Cookingham, city manager at Saginaw, Michigan.

What has happened since Gage and Cookingham took hold is a municipal miracle. In personnel the merit system has been restored and the boss-padded city payroll slashed from 7,200 to 3,200. For the first time the city has a reliable municipal budget. The city's immemorial deficits have been turned into a cash surplus of more than $1,500,000. The general tax levy has been reduced 5 per cent.

In the machine's heyday the city fire department was so corrupt and inefficient that Kansas Cityans frequently declared that they were less afraid of fire than of firemen. No new equipment had been purchased in ten years. Fire losses had increased to the point where an increase in insurance rates for the city was in prospect.

The new government has built a new department, weeding out encumbrances and choosing new men by the merit system. The long disused training school has been reopened. Out of department savings—the gas bill alone has been cut in half—five new pieces of equipment have been purchased. Per capita loss by fire has been cut from $2.41 in 1939 to $1.67 in 1940.

Instead of a dozen inadequately supervised playgrounds the city this summer ran and supervised fifty-nine. There are 230 teams in its newly organized softball leagues. Juvenile delinquency has been reduced 80 per cent.

Cleanup of the police department began in 1939 when Governor Lloyd C. Stark, backed by the Kansas City crusade, forced a bill through the state legislature which restored to

the governor power to appoint the city's police commissioners. His appointees went to J. Edgar Hoover for their police chief, and secured L. B. Reed.

Reed, a member of the F.B.I.'s Kansas City staff, knew the department and its weak spots. Half the men on it—many of them ex-convicts —were forthwith fired. The force he developed is made up of young men, many with college training, chosen by the merit system. What he has now is a miniature F.B.I.

The result has changed the crime-face of the city. Gangsters now give it a wide berth. The red-light district and the gambling joints have been shut tight. The city is as free of narcotic peddlers as any place of its size in the country. Robberies have been reduced 75 per cent, burglaries 78 per cent, auto thefts have dropped from an average of 186 to 18 a month.

After a year and a half of the new government civic morale has revived. Block by block the downtown section of the city is having its face cleaned and lifted. New industries which shied away from the city while the bosses ruled have begun to move in. No longer on the defensive, but with something to sell, an advertising campaign will be launched this fall to introduce the new Kansas City to the nation.

The bosses, buried but not yet dead, are counting on the machine-devotion of their small army of one-time jobholders, and the tendency of reform movements to languish after a first success, to boost them into power again in 1942. But Kansas City has its chin up and is going places. Its crusaders, their organization intact, are already reshining their armor and mobilizing for next spring's electoral combat. They relish the prospect. Against that kind of city even the shrewdness and corruption of a reviving machine are unlikely to prevail.

Effective National Defense and Municipal Home Rule

"Our legislatures will be remiss in their duty if they fail to give the cities of America an opportunity to carry their share of the defense responsibility."

By BARNET HODES
Corporation Counsel, City of Chicago

SINCE Missouri in 1875 led the movement for constitutional home rule for cities, few municipal subjects have evoked more commentaries than has the topic of "home rule." Admittedly the results of all these commentaries, in terms of effective legislative reform, have not seemed wholly commensurate with the wordage devoted to this subject. Yet an additional discussion appears to be pertinent at the present time, first, because constitutional home rule remains as desirable for all cities today as it was back in 1875—the fight must go on!—and, second, because demands of national defense on our cities make home rule almost an emergency issue.

It can be truthfully said that there is no area of activity that is not touched, however tangentially, by the defense effort. The farmer, the business man, the laborer, the taxpayer, and men and women in all strata of our national life, already have started to adjust their normal activities to coincide with the new demands of a defense economy. Undoubtedly, more adjustments are ahead, and what affects people is bound to affect the government that is closest to them—municipal government.

The need for conservation of vital resources, the search for new forms of taxation, the pressing new health and housing problems, the inevitability of increased regulation and restriction of certain businesses and business practices—all these point to unusual pressures upon our municipalities.

In fact, every acceleration of the national defense effort is bound to increase responsibilities of cities, if only in indirect ways. To meet greater responsibilities greater power is essential always. This would apply to our cities even if we avoid a "shooting war." If we do not avoid "shooting," the experience of every other nation in the present conflict reveals that municipal life will be concerned in the present kind of war even more than in past wars. Certainly the municipal officials of London found themselves engaged in war activities as completely as if they were in the army itself. They found that in modern war the city is on the front line. That lesson ought not be lost on American municipalities.

It may not "happen here." We hope it does not. But now is the time to prepare—and the granting to cities of sufficient power to cope with any emergency strikes me as a basic element of such preparedness. We

may not have to use the power, but we ought to have it.

Consider the police functions of a city. In case of a defense emergency the police department becomes much more than an agency for maintaining civil order. It becomes an arm of the national defense program, certainly the pivot around which civilian activities in case of emergency will revolve. Yet in municipalities which lack home rule police departments are now so hampered by legal restrictions that they are hindered in carrying out even normal, peacetime functions. For an example, the Chicago Police Department may not even regulate traffic without specific state permission. Consider the difficulties, then, if we are forced to go upon an emergency defense basis.

The expansion of industry, an anticipated housing shortage with its concomitant problems, together with the problem of large military camps near cities, will make it even more imperative that the municipality possess authority to enact public health measures under new and increasingly severe conditions. Restrictions on municipal powers in this field are bound to become more intolerable as our defense program gathers momentum.

Protection against the hazards of fire is an essential municipal function. Yet when the city council of Chicago passed an ordinance compelling certain classes of employers to train their employees in fire drills, the Illinois Supreme Court held such law invalid under the state constitution. The national defense program entails expanded manufacturing, often of dangerous chemicals and munitions. If such manufacturing cannot be regulated to prevent fire hazards, then obviously the city is thwarted in its attempts to coöperate with the defense program. This is aside from the need of cities to be prepared to sponsor air-raid protection and similar programs, in which municipal fire departments, as well as police departments, must take the lead.

Utilities Raise Problems

Transportation and other public utilities raise two more significant phases of this all-embracing problem. Today, this involves questions of service and rates. Tomorrow, defense significance may be paramount. Here the city lacking home rule is almost entirely powerless, and it is precisely in those realms where action may be most needed.

For example, Chicago cannot control the speed of trains and other common carriers within its borders. It cannot prohibit railroads from obstructing street crossings. It cannot compel adequate safety devices at street crossings. It cannot prevent the operation of one-man street cars or motor buses in the interest of public safety. It cannot subject railroads to the electrical regulations of the city, even though the state itself has no inspection service for this purpose.

In peaceful times such conditions are bad enough, but our communities have been able to muddle through. Yet, without detailing specific fields in which utilities, transportation facilities in particular, are vital to defense, it is easy to envision how such

municipal impotency may seriously impede steps for all-out preparedness.

Urban areas are constantly growing, both in population and in size. New factories and also residential districts are making their appearance, spurred on by the defense effort. Freight traffic in and through cities has multiplied during the last decade. And all signs point to even greater activity in this direction in the years ahead. The demands of the national defense program require that the city mobilize all its forces and evolve an integrated plan of coöperation in each aspect of defense production: manufacturing, housing, traffic, land use, public health, regulation of utilities. Yet in each of these phases the city without home rule powers is almost impotent, however willing it may be, to render full service to the national government, except as it goes to its parent, the state, for permissive legislation.

States Must Act

To obtain relief from the state legislature may be a matter of weeks or months. Can our defense needs be met under such restrictive conditions? Can cities lacking home rule be expected to respond quickly and effectively to the day-by-day requirements of the defense program, let alone emergency demands? These are questions for our state leaders to ask—and answer.

Clarence A. Dykstra, former selective service administrator, stated the problem succinctly when he declared: "As I see the problem, progress lies in the hands of local administrative officials who are allowed to act with originality and imagination to meet local situations, rather than a further tightening of the cords which bind them to officials with offices in the state house."

Of late, there has been a closer relationship between the federal government and American municipalities. The Office of Civilian Defense was created to further strengthen this relationship and to make, in effect, each American city a focus of defense activity. For this purpose many cities have established defense councils or commissions. And here, again, it may be predicted that cities lacking home rule will find that the efforts of their defense councils are impeded by statutory restrictions. Such matters as air-raid precautions, detection of sabotage, civilian defense training, vocational guidance for defense jobs, and numerous other activities which are just around the corner, are likely to come within the scope of municipal activity.

Yet in the past the courts have rigorously upheld the state in all its efforts to restrain cities from assuming new duties and obligations, and we may be sure that even defense activities will be restricted by this attitude. And there is little reason to believe that this attitude will undergo a change without legislative or constitutional home rule powers granted to the municipalities.

The demand for adequate home rule powers cannot be construed as special pleading on behalf of cities. All home rule advocates recognize the necessity for some measure of state supervision; and none wishes the city

(Continued on Page 616)

Citizen Budgeting in Massachusetts

The lay finance committee is an outgrowth of the town meeting, and is wholly native to New England's town form of government.

By RICHARD A. ATKINS
Boston Municipal Research Bureau
and LYMAN H. ZIEGLER
Massachusetts Federation of Taxpayers Associations

THE low estate to which the town meeting in Quincy, Massachusetts, had fallen by 1870 was naturally a source of concern to its older citizens. All the restraints of an earlier day seemed to have been lost, and town affairs were being conducted with slight regard for the traditional virtues of New England town government. Accordingly it was a matter of satisfaction for the town's respected Adams family to note the changes which occurred when John Quincy Adams the younger took the situation in hand.

Order was soon restored. Members had to be seated in town meeting and remove their hats, and the atmosphere was cleared of tobacco fumes. More was at issue, however, than mere decorum. In forty years Quincy's financial requirements had increased from a few thousand to over seventy-five thousand dollars. Town auditors reported that money was being poured out "like water." Since the warrant for the annual town meeting had grown from a half dozen to thirty or forty articles, the town meeting seemed unable to cope with the mounting volume of business and the town's chaotic finances.

Two procedural reforms were introduced. The town returned to its old practice of holding an adjourned business meeting after members had recovered from the excitement and fatigue of elections. And more important, the town agreed "to refer all the business articles in the warrant to a large committee, which was to subdivide itself, investigate everything, and at [the] adjourned meeting report its conclusions in the form of votes properly drawn up." Results were gratifying. Town finances were soon brought under control, and the town meeting was given a new lease on life.

While there may be some question as to whether this episode marked the beginning of the town finance committee, it does tell something of the origin and purposes of an innovation in town government that has spread through the New England states. To the townspeople of the present, the finance committee has become a trustworthy interpreter of bewildering municipal questions and, as they may not appreciate, an indispensable means of continuing the town form of government. To the thoughtful citizen anywhere the idea of a fiscal policy group drawn from the body of voters has a strong appeal. The purpose here is to explore the development, methods, and characteristics of these committees, and

to suggest some reasons for their undoubted prestige and influence.

Development of Finance Committee

The finance committee evolved from the town meeting much as the board of selectmen had, to serve as an interim committee to study and report on town affairs—but with one important difference. The board of selectmen had been created both to advise and to administer; the finance committee was only to advise.

In a sense the appearance of the finance committee was inescapable. A rapid growth of population after the Civil War, coupled with the broadening role of local government, left the voter in the position of a greenhorn legislator, poorly qualified to participate in the town meeting. And the opinion of sometimes politically-minded selectmen, as the only steering group, was not always innocent of prejudice. What was needed was a group of responsible citizens who would study town affairs from the point of view of the voters and who would interpret the intricacies of town business in terms which they could understand. This need the finance committee supplied.

A generation passed after Quincy's experience before finance committees were recognized by the Massachusetts legislature. By the time a general enabling law was enacted, in 1910, they were no longer a novelty. And when in 1923 they were made obligatory in towns having valuations above a million dollars, more than thirty were in existence.

A similar committee appeared in Maine at the turn of the century, and they are now the rule in towns of over two thousand population. Connecticut has had local "boards of finance" for at least as long. Their growth was accelerated first by a permissive law of 1917 and more recently by the hard lessons of the depression decade. Vermont has followed a somewhat different course, while Rhode Island has an equivalent in its limited financial councils. New Hampshire has gone farthest in formalizing a town budget committee by writing it into the local finance act of 1935. Both New Hampshire and Connecticut have taken pains to define the relation of the finance committee to the town officials and the town meeting, an arrangement which Massachusetts has, perhaps wisely, allowed to develop as it will in each town.

Some Mechanical Aspects

In Massachusetts town finance committees have had the longest history and occur in widest array. The balance of this discussion will be given over to the finance committees as evolved in that state.

Procedures and duties of the finance committee are usually established in the by-laws of a town. These have the force of municipal ordinances and cover an indefinite range of matters under local control. The general laws require only that there be such a committee in towns above the prescribed valuation, that it be appointed rather than elected, and that it have nothing more than advisory powers aside from the authority to make transfers from a reserve fund to departmental appropriations. In addition the committee

is required to prepare an annual budget for the town meeting, unless the town elects to give this duty, under by-law, to the selectmen.

The finance committee appears under several names. Four titles are in common use: *appropriation committee,* indicating that the group concerns itself only with town meeting articles involving expenditures; *warrant committee,* if all articles of business are considered; and *finance committee* or *advisory committee,* more or less at random. Committees vary in size from three to more than thirty members, the most common numbers being nine and fifteen. Much the larger proportion of finance committees are appointed by the town moderator, the presiding officer of the town meeting. Naming the finance committee is one of his most influential acts.

There are many other ways of selecting the finance committee. In Arlington, for instance, the committee is chosen jointly by the moderator, the chairman of the trust funds, and the chairman of the finance committee itself. Norwood, one of the four manager towns, requires the selectmen to act as a finance commission. In Holliston the committee is elected by ballot under special dispensation of the state legislature. Towns divided into precincts may require representatives from each election area. There are numerous examples of *ex officio* membership. Inclusion of the town auditor or accountant is a common practice. In Brookline the moderator acts as chairman and the selectmen serve on the town's Committee of Thirty.

As for the scope of the committee's advisory powers, the principal distinction lies in whether it is confined under by-law to the consideration of financial matters or whether it may "investigate everything." A less important distinction concerns the accessibility of departmental records and books of account. A recent and far-reaching court opinion seems to say that a town may adopt a self-denying by-law through which it may bind itself to the recommendation of the committee. Such a construction of "advisory power," however, was probably never intended by the legislature.

A Word on Procedures

Most of the procedures of the finance committee turn on its budget activities. Normally the committee will organize after the town meeting in the spring and name its own chairman. During the summer months the committee is likely to remain dormant, except as it considers articles of business at special town meetings. Few committees attempt to exercise any oversight of expenditures, control of which passes entirely to the town officers. Exceptions are found. In Weston, for example, the finance committee meets at monthly intervals and wavers on the borderline of overall administration by attempting to coördinate town activities.

In the late autumn, just prior to budget time, the award of reserve fund transfers to departments causes a temporary spurt of committee activity. This is followed shortly by receipt of budget estimates from the selectmen, who in most towns assem-

ble them from departments with the assistance of the town accountant. As a rule, estimates are received late in December or in the first two or three weeks of January. In towns where adequate procedures have been developed, the estimates will be carried on carefully designed forms, with comparative figures and some supporting detail. In this respect Massachusetts lags behind New Hampshire which requires the use of a state-prescribed form for departmental estimates.

If the finance committee is large, it is often organized into sub-committees to which town functions are assigned. The sub-committees hear the spending officials, sometimes visit the departments, and arrive at allowances for report back to the full committee. Public hearings are often but not always held before the finance committee settles upon its recommendations. Such hearings might be described as a species of pre-trial where disputed issues and contentious personalities can be dealt with in advance of the town meeting.

The busy season comes in January and February when evening sessions may be held almost daily. It is well to bear in mind that committeemen serve without pay. For relief from detail, even in the largest towns, they will have no more than a part-time and modestly paid clerk. If members work diligently, as they usually do, it is not for any immediate reward.

Finance committee recommendations always cover the financial articles in the town warrant, and more often than not the remaining articles of business. Committee findings are incorporated in a printed report which is normally sent to town meeting members several days in advance of the meeting. These reports give a fair indication of the methods, thoroughness, and intelligence of the individual committees. The best reports, which in a few towns are thirty- or forty-page documents, afford the voters a broad view of town finances as well as specific recommendations for action of the meeting.

The rôle of the finance committee in town meeting is apt to be an accurate barometer of its standing in the town. Some committees keep in the background, to be sure, but the most familiar sight is the presence on the platform of the committee chairman, strategically located at the center of things, ready to read committee recommendations in the form of motions, and more than ready to defend the recommendations when dissident voices are heard. On the floor it is the rare voter who does not have the printed recommendations in hand during the entire progress of the meeting.

Part of the Scheme of Things

Last spring the Boston papers featured the story of an annual town meeting which disposed of all the business in the warrant by accepting the recommendations of the finance committee in one blanket vote. The meeting adjourned as late-comers were still arriving. While this incident must be viewed as an extreme example, the reasons behind the finance committee's influence should be examined.

In the first place finance committee

members, with rare exceptions, are drawn from the town meeting itself —the body which acts upon the committee's report and votes the appropriations. The nearest parallel, therefore, is a legislative budget committee with adequate power to frame a financial plan. At the same time it may be regarded as a citizen budget committee, sharing the distinctive status of the voters in a New England town. Town government is basically citizen or lay government, involving extensive direct participation in both legislative and administrative matters.

Over the years the finance committee has acquired a special standing of its own. The committee antedated its formal recognition in law and it has had two generations in which to accumulate prestige. Official appointment gives it an extra authority that a self-appointed group could scarcely hope to attain. Fortified further with the sanction of judicial opinion and local ordinance the finance committee is well equipped to assume leadership.

To what extent the political role of the finance committee contributes to its broad influence is a matter of conjecture. Certainly in many towns the committee plays a creditable part in the political life of the community. Membership is frequently regarded as the only proper approach to higher public office, and a successful term as chairman is likely to be an open sesame to town officialdom. Although novices predominate on many committees, it is not uncommon for town officers in their later years to withdraw to the finance committee as the equivalent of retirement to a private station. Finally, the finance committee must be looked upon as a significant educational factor. In any large Massachusetts town it is possible to find scores of ex-committee members who have been well disciplined in the fundamentals of town government and public finance by long winter evenings spent over the annual town warrant.

Tendencies and Trends

Town government lends itself to pressure from within and the finance committee may serve to even out the demands of minorities. Numerically imposing groups, such as fire and police forces and the school group, must be reckoned with. A story is told of a town meeting where the firemen and their affiliates were present in such strength as to override the gathering. The opposition, quite aware of what lay ahead yet unable to rally its friends, contrived to have an alarm pulled. Only in this manner was a democratic balance restored.

The finance committee is also in a position to supply the town meeting with an understandable view of town finances. Public finance, even in its more elementary aspects, is not congenial to every type of mind. At one meeting there was an article in the warrant calling for a schoolhouse addition. A voter rose to demonstrate that the structure would not cost the town a cent. Since a schoolhouse loan was to mature during the year, the new bonds would merely replace the old.

Apart from correcting such devia-

tions the finance committee can look ahead. Many are in the habit of anticipating the outcome of the year's financial plans long before all the ingredients can be estimated with close accuracy. To preserve a favorable debt ratio through a period of years necessitates a yet broader continuity in policy and outlook.

About ten years ago a resident of Concord—home of so many causes—started an organization of finance committee members. Today the association bears all the earmarks of an authentic society. It meets periodically. Members engage in both mutual and self-criticism. The association has issued a series of bulletins and exchanges information, and it looks for help from informed sources outside its own ranks.

More noteworthy is the fact that it is moving toward a standard of performance. The program laid down by its leading spokesman, while primarily of local interest, contains many guiding principles which any group that sets itself up to pass upon public expenditures could profitably follow. Stress is laid upon sound budget procedure, maintenance of services, an over-all view of town finances, workable relations with town officials, avoidance of purely administrative activity, and informative reporting.

It is not proposed here to say what direction things should take. Nevertheless, brief consideration of what is in the thought of competent observers will help complete the picture. One viewpoint favors longer terms, up to the legal limit of three years, for members of the committee and also overlapping terms. There is a conviction that the committee should be given access to the records and accounts of the town without waiting upon the pleasure of town officials. Doubts have been raised as to the desirability of *ex officio* membership by selectmen or heads of town boards. Another point of dispute is the merit of an elective as against an appointive committee. Finally, there is a struggle over the extent of the committee's out-of-season effort. The correct formula, it is felt, lies between outright administrative interference and a complete lapse of effort once the budget has been adopted.

In review, the place of the finance committee in the town results from a combination of circumstances which has no equivalent outside New England. The uniqueness of the committee lies in its intimate relation to the town meeting.

On the other hand, much of the committee's effectiveness is within reach of any properly constituted citizen group. Government by dispersed executive authority, and government by a patchwork of overlapping and parallel jurisdictions are common enough to suggest the opportunities of an over-all fiscal policy committee, adequately equipped to secure a unified pattern of action. If good results are to follow, the Massachusetts experience does indicate that at least three features of the finance committee must be borrowed: legal or official recognition, plainly-stated responsibility to the voters, and a clear-cut separation from administrative agencies.

Citizen Groups in Review (Part I)

Discussing the citizen in a democracy, the nature of citizen organizations, and the activities in which they engage.

By HOWARD M. KLINE
University of Maryland

THE literature on local government during the last ten years has given increasing attention to a new species of semi-public institution which, like hundreds of its predecessors, is dedicated to the thankless task of improving local government. This new form is the "citizens group" or "citizens organization."

Generally speaking, citizens groups are organized to work for "good government," "sound principles," "economy and efficiency," "more intelligent and effective citizen participation," the promotion of "good citizenship and/or community improvement." That these ambiguities, like political party platforms, may mean all things to all people is in many ways the very genius and strategy of the movement, because great numbers of private citizens can (and do) agree that these are sound objectives worthy of encouragement and subscription.

The citizen in a democracy is both the subject and object of government. All governmental functions are presumably carried on for his benefit, and certainly at his expense. Therefore, what is more proper than that the citizens should have some voice in, and control over, both the functions and the expense? This is part and parcel of the "consent of the governed" concept. This consent, called by the authorities public opinion, is crystallized only at infrequent intervals, i.e., elections and even on those occasions the simple alternative between two rival candidates does not afford an opportunity to express opinions on the welter of issues involved.

Except for the few remaining town meetings our democratic pattern does not now provide any official machinery through which public opinion can be mobilized in the interim between elections.

Hence, we may regard the citizens group as a device by which the general public can gather information upon public questions, a device by which public opinion can be formulated and expressed, and a device through which the public official can ascertain the direction and velocity of that opinion.

But the citizens group is more than this. It is also the pressure group which represents the "public interest," self-defined.

This is the logic of the position of citizens groups in the democratic system, with particular reference to local government. The citizens groups exist and carry on their activities in an exceedingly practical and hard-headed world of politics, and they must be considered against such a background. There are a few important observations about that hard-headed world of politics, and the hard-headed citizens that compose it which are worthy of mention here

First, modern government operates in a sphere of complexity and technicality which is beyond both the time and competence of the so-called average citizen. Issues of financial control and accountability, budgetary procedure, long-time planning and zoning, council-manager relations, and social case work, for example, the citizen has not the time to study, nor the inclination, except in instances of obvious threat to his own security. Whether these problems are outside his ability to grasp is perhaps a matter of opinion, but it is by no means certain that he will ever understand them, especially when he is obliged to choose between competing viewpoints.

Second, substantial portions of the public do not take even an annual or biennial part in political issues—witness the frequent studies of partial and non-voting. The citizens group operates on the assumption that one of the basic reasons for this non-participation is that many citizens lack the facts, doubt their present sources of information, and have a distrust for those in office and their views. It is at least argumentative whether there is any real virtue in adding another disquieting source of "facts" which, in general, betray what the citizen already more than mildly suspects, namely, that there is great waste and mismanagement at the city hall. A corollary question might be added—why press upon the lethargic and apathetic, facts and issues in which they have demonstrated an abiding unconcern? The answer is: because it is good for them! They *ought* to be interested!

Third, the great majority of citizens groups are predicated upon the assumption that there exists in the city hall a relatively corrupt, constantly inefficient, political machine interested only in self-perpetuation. There can be no doubt that in most American cities the city hall is not occupied by a corps of self-effacing, unselfish, economy-seeking, nonpartisan employees. Perhaps they are not quite so bad as they are portrayed, however.

Only the naïve believe that public officials are guided by principle alone; all alike conduct themselves with a view to forthcoming elections. They stand condemned before citizens groups for failing to inaugurate this reform or that, and the failure is attributed to their fear of losing a few votes, to alienating the support of some faction of the party, to abiding the advice of the wrong people. What has the citizens group to offer the official who follows its recommendations? After he has succumbed to one set of its suggestions, what follows? Is it praise, or promise of political support, or testimonials that may be used to capture the wavering independents? No: what follows instead is another set of recommendations!

It may very well be that the needs and opportunities to improve city government are legion, and the sets of recommendations endless accordingly, but few men ever reached public office (and fewer still were ever re-elected) who followed this brand of political hara-kiri.

Nature of Citizens Groups

Citizen efforts have been principal-

ly confined to local government—city, county, and region. Few are found on the national scene and their appearance at the state capitals has been of rare, though increasing, frequency. One of the most conspicuous trends in recent years has been a sharp increase in state-wide citizen organization, especially the state taxpayers leagues.

In identifying citizens groups "beware the wolf in sheep's clothing." Selfish, interest-serving, machine politicians have sought to disguise their actual identity and their purposes by clothing their organizations in the nicety of a citizens title. Spurious citizens leagues, taxpayers associations, and civic research bureaus are apt to mushroom in the course of a closely contested election campaign or in the midst of a controversy over local policy. They are foils to mislead the unwary.

The present literature on citizens organizations yields no substantial agreement on just what is, and what is not, a *bona fide* citizens group. Some would throw the concept open to any group whose membership is recruited from private citizens and whose nearly full-time purpose is local government improvement. Others would limit the concept by cleaving off those organizations which could be regarded as private interest groups, those which admit corporations to membership, or those which indulge themselves in local government problems only occasionally.

According to the one view nearly every community organization—educational, vocational, fraternal, religious, political—even the political parties themselves—are citizens groups; according to the other view, organizations are included or excluded according to the frequency and motive of their civic undertakings. Neither definition is very satisfactory: one is so broad as hardly to be a definition, and the other substitutes two ambiguities where only one was before.

One distinction is, however, generally recognized: there is a substantial difference between a citizens group and a citizens council. The citizens council is a central meeting ground for already established citizens organizations with the avowed intent of thereby focusing the attention of the whole public upon common community-wide problems. In some cities this citizens council, or federation of civic clubs, serves as a clearing house and tries to integrate the work of the several citizens groups.[1] The parallel may be drawn between the citizens council and the familiar community chest which consolidates the public subscription program of all welfare agencies.

The National Municipal League undertook in 1933 to act as a national headquarters for all citizens groups and citizens councils through the Federation of Citizens' Organizations. The federation has issued pamphlets on how to organize a citizens council, what issues to study, what committees to appoint, and the like, along with generous offers of advice and of printed materials on

[1]The Federation of Citizens Associations of Washington, D. C., affords an excellent illustration. The federation is composed of two delegates from each of the sixty-five constituent citizens groups, representing a total membership of nearly 45,000.

leading issues. The federation had given prime consideration to the citizens council on the correct assumption that there already exists a great sufficiency of citizens groups, and that what is needed is not more of the same but a medium of cohesion for this "headless army of a thousand separate little bands."[2]

Existing Citizens Groups

Any attempt to call the roll of the huge variety of citizens groups which are now in existence, or to identify the whole range of interests represented in these groups, is a prodigious task. The variety is immense. For example, Professor Ewing, of the University of Denver, lists twenty-six types of community agencies which are engaged in whole or in part in citizen activities—patriotic, military, peace, fraternal, service, taxpayers, trade, radio, research, women's, religious, racial, youth, bankers, newspapers, publicity, and other groups.

The Committee of Citizens' Councils for Constructive Economy of the National Municipal League in its *Citizens Council—Why and How* urges anyone organizing a citizens council to secure representatives from all those groups and, specifically, in addition, from the Red Cross, boards of education, Boy Scouts, community chests, hospital staffs, libraries, museums, tuberculosis associations, religious leaders' organizations, YMCA, YWCA, and others.

Between these two impressive arrays of citizens groups there exists hardly an organization that would not fall into one or the other of these lists. Indeed, the very purpose of a citizen's council is to represent as many divergent interests as possible. Such widespread and diverse representation suggests the possibility of outflanking the present political party organizations. Does this movement boil down to the fact that the so-called better citizens are not able to wield in the present system what they feel is sufficient influence? Even if we had proportional representation in each community, would the need for citizens groups be any less urgent?

Categories of Activity Groups

In order to sharpen the operating differences between citizen organizations, we may observe three or four broad categories: (1) those organizations which are engaged primarily in fact-finding and research activities both for the benefit of their own members and for the general public; (2) those organizations which, equipped with their own or someone else's researches, are engaged in bringing various pressures for the adoption of their recommendations; (3) those organizations which are engaged in active campaigning for their own slate of candidates, or for a slate acceptable to them. Many writers have found a fourth type of organization, namely, those engaged in adult education, citizenship training, and public discussion programs. Here are often included such conferences and institutes as the Citizens Council of Kansas, the Institute of Government of the University of Southern California, and the Wil-

[2]See "Citizens Groups, Tool of Democracy," by Howard P. Jones. *The Annals*, September 1938.

liamstown Institute. Perhaps these organizations are worthy of separate classification, or perhaps they ought to be included in the second category above.

The first of these general categories is occupied largely by the various research bureaus, whose number and influence and reputation have constantly increased during the last thirty years. Their reputation as reliable sources of fact is unimpeachable in many of our cities and they quite frequently provide the ammunition for other citizens groups. Many communities are still without the excellent services of such associations, and in most of the communities where they do exist their services are limited to a mere presentation of the facts and figures. Even here, however, the director of the bureau is often called upon by public officials for advice and services, and often exerts a greater influence than first meets the eye.

Next comes the so-called pressure groups, if that odious term be not understood to comprehend any immediately selfish interest. Here are the great majority of extant citizens groups. To be specific, here are the taxpayers associations, chambers of commerce, parent-teachers associations, city clubs, civic clubs, women's clubs, voters leagues, community and neighborhood improvement associations, civic federations, and a whole host of social welfare, health, recreation, planning and education associations. Some of these groups have very few specific objectives; some have a great many. Some of them proceed one way one year, and an entirely different way another year. Nor are similar groups identical in different cities: for example, the chamber of commerce or a luncheon club in city "X" may be the leading citizens group, active in behalf of an imposing array of civic issues, whereas the same organization in city "Y" is utterly inactive.

The third of the previously mentioned categories is reserved for those groups which use their own or someone else's researches, are active as pressure groups in the intervals between elections, but which also go farther and actively engage in campaigning for a slate of candidates. Organizations of this kind, while fewer in number, are somewhat more spectacular than their civic cousins. The Charter Committee of Cincinnati is perhaps the best known instance. It has organized its forces along ward and precinct lines, manned the polls, and waged a full-fledged campaign with the standard weapons of election warfare. The NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW contains numerous accounts of the successes of such organizations in throwing back the continued assaults of the political machines.

In addition to these full-time, permanent citizens parties there have been numerous instances of the formation of citizens groups for specific campaign purposes.[3] Indeed, the history of the citizen organization move-

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[3]For example, the Citizens Committee of Saginaw (Mich.) was a temporary federation of existing organizations for the express purposes of securing charter revision, adoption of the manager plan and the election of the first manager council. They were, in fact, so successful there remained nothing further to be done. Interest waned and the committee died for want of grist.

Fiscal Control at the County Level

"The possibilities of control by a county agency as an alternative to state control have not yet been adequately explored."

By CLYDE F. SNIDER
University of Illinois

DURING recent decades numerous states have inaugurated in varying forms systems of state control over the financial operations of local governments. In some instances these control measures have envisaged only the establishment of minimum or uniform requirements relating to budgeting procedure, accounting, auditing, and reporting; while in others provision has been made for state review, either as a matter of course or upon petition, of the legality and wisdom of proposed budgets, tax levies, and borrowings.

Proposals for state control have, however, been defeated in some states and vigorously opposed in others as violating the "principle of home rule" or the "rights of local self-government." Opposition has come both from organizations of local officials and from citizens who sincerely fear the results of subjecting the county courthouse and city hall to dictation from the state capitol.

In view of the substantial opposition to centralized state control, it seems strange that more attention has not been given to the possibility of establishing a system of control at the county level, thereby securing at least a part of the benefits which might flow from state supervision while at the same time preserving a greater degree of local self-determination.[1]

At the present time four states have statewide systems of county agencies exercising some form of fiscal supervision over their local units. These states, with the present titles of their agencies and the dates of establishment, are: Oklahoma, county excise board, 1910; Ohio, county budget commission, 1911; Indiana, county board of tax adjustment, 1932; and Michigan, county tax allocation board, 1933.[2]

Oklahoma County Excise Boards

As originally established in 1910 the Oklahoma county excise board was composed of five county officials *ex officio*: clerk, treasurer, judge, superintendent of public instruction, and attorney. Each taxing unit with-

[1]For a more extensive treatment of the subject discussed in this article see study prepared by the writer for the Research Department of the Illinois Legislative Council and published as that department's Publication No. 29, *The Problem of Local Fiscal Control with Special Reference to Control at the County Level*, Springfield, Illinois, 1940. Acknowledgment is due Dr. J. F. Isakoff, the council's director of research, for permission to make use of materials appearing first in the larger study.

[2]Another instance of a state-wide system of fiscal control at the county level is afforded by the county school budget commission in New Mexico. This commission, however, exercises authority over school districts only, rather than over local taxing units in general, and therefore is not discussed in this article.

in the county submitted annually to the excise board its estimated needs for current expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year. The excise board was empowered, after examination of the estimates at a public meeting, to revise and correct them and to make the tax levies necessary to cover the estimates as approved.

In 1917 the membership of the excise board was enlarged by provision for two additional members—the county assessor and a member of the board of county commissioners designated by the board. In 1931 the seven-member *ex officio* board was displaced by the present three-member appointive board—one appointed by the Oklahoma Tax Commission, one by the district judge or judges, and one by the board of county commissioners.

Although the statutes governing the powers of excise boards might appear to be broad enough to authorize the boards to pass upon the mere wisdom of proposed appropriations, their actual power as construed by the courts seems to be limited to passing upon the legality of appropriation items. Thus budgetary items may be disapproved or reduced by an excise board only when they are unauthorized by law or when the proposed budget is in excess of statutory limitations.

When, in 1933, the Oklahoma constitution was amended to substitute a 15-mill overall property tax rate limit for the previous 31½-mill limit, it was stipulated that the 15-mill rate should "be apportioned between county, city, town and school district by the county excise board until such time as the regular apportionment is otherwise provided for by the legislature." Since the legislature has not yet seen fit to exercise its power to apportion the total rate among the various units, this second function has been performed since 1933 by the excise boards.

It is significant that the *ex officio* composition of the excise board as it existed prior to 1931 seems to have been criticized in Oklahoma on two principal grounds: (1) the board was composed of tax spenders, i.e., county officials rather than taxpayers, and therefore tended to be extravagant with public funds; and (2) since the county officials were usually residents of the rural districts, municipal expenditures were subject to review by a board of farmers.

The change to the present three-member appointive board seems to have been motivated by a desire to place supervision of local finance in the hands of a group of impartial taxpayers selected in such a manner that both the state and the locality would share in control.

But although the present board seems to have worked more satisfactorily than the former *ex officio* board, it appears that the present system raises its own problems. Thus, there seems to have been a tendency, during certain periods at least, for the State Tax Commission to appoint board members who would be disposed to stress economy, while county commissioners appoint members more sympathetic toward local expenditures. As a result, boards are

sometimes torn by factional conflicts.[3]

Ohio County Budget Commissions

County budget commissions have existed in Ohio since 1911 as agencies charged with apportionment of a statutory or constitutional maximum overall tax rate among the various taxing units within the counties. As originally established the commission consisted of three *ex officio* members: county auditor, mayor of the largest municipality within the county, and county prosecuting attorney. Two years later its composition was changed. Instead of the prosecutor the third member of the commission was, in certain counties, the solicitor of the largest municipality, and in others a member of the school board of the school district containing the largest municipality. Since 1915 the three-member commission has consisted of the county auditor, county treasurer, and prosecuting attorney.

When the present 10-mill rate limit replaced a 15-mill limit in 1934, the budget commissions were required to approve, as a matter of course, any request by a taxing unit for a levy equal to two-thirds of its average levy during the last five years the 15-mill limit was in effect. This amounted to a freezing, by legislative action, of the levies allocated to the various local units by county budget commissions in former years, thereby drastically curtailing the discretionary power of the budget commission in the allocation of levies in the future. Appeal from the action of a county budget commission may be taken to the State Board of Tax Appeals.

Indiana Tax Adjustment Boards

County boards of tax adjustment were first established in Indiana by the tax-limitation law of 1932. This statute provided for an over-all maximum property tax rate of $1.50 on each hundred dollars of assessed valuation, and created the tax adjustment board as an agency to apportion this total rate among the various taxing units concerned.[4] The board was originally composed of seven members: county auditor *ex officio*, three members of the county council (an elective fiscal board distinct from the board of county commissioners) selected by the council, and three members appointed by the circuit judge. It reviewed the proposed tax levies of the county and all taxing units therein, and, if necessary, reduced such levies so as to keep the total levy within the statutory maximum.[5] The board was empowered, however, provided five of its seven members assented, to declare the existence of an emergency and authorize a total levy in excess of the general limit. Appeal might be taken to

[3]See also *State Control of Local Finance in Oklahoma* (pp. 103-5), by Robert K. Carr, Norman, Okla., 1937.

[4]The statute fixed a maximum state rate of fifteen cents on each hundred dollars, leaving $1.35 to be apportioned by the adjustment board among the local governmental units. The amount of the over-all limitation has been changed from time to time, and is now $2 in the case of property within incorporated cities or towns, and $1.25 outside such municipal corporations.

[5]Since 1933 certain local levies for debt service and poor relief have been excepted from the provisions of the limitation statute and therefore not subject to reduction by the adjustment board.

the State Board of Tax Commissioners from action of the adjustment board authorizing such a levy.

The composition of the board was changed in 1933 and again in 1937. In the former year it consisted of one member of the county council selected by the council and six members appointed by the circuit judge. The circuit judge, in making his appointments, was required to select: one township trustee, one mayor of a city or president of a board of town trustees, one member of a city or town school board, and three resident freeholders. The principal result of this change was to represent each principal class of local taxing unit, and not the county alone.

Under an act of 1937 the seven-member adjustment board now includes: one member of the county council selected by the council, one official of a city or incorporated town, one member of a city school board or county board of education, and four citizen freeholders appointed by the circuit judge.[6] The 1937 change is noteworthy because it involved a shift of control of the board from "official" members to "citizen" members.

In addition to altering the composition of the adjustment board the 1937 law deprived the board of its power to authorize total tax rates in excess of the statutory maximum. At the present time, if a county adjustment board believes in any instance that local financial needs cannot be met adequately by a levy within the general maximum, it may recommend to the State Board of Tax Commissioners the authorization of a higher rate, but only the state board has power to make such authorization. This transfer of authority to the state board may, of course, indicate a belief on the part of the legislature that action of a more equitable and impartial character in such matters may be expected from a state agency.

[6]In counties having superior courts the judges of such courts participate in the selection of the citizen members of the board. As under the 1933 law, appointments are made by the judge or judges in such manner that not more than four of the seven members shall belong to the same political party.

Michigan County Tax Allocation Boards

In 1932 the Michigan constitution was amended to provide that with certain exceptions the total property tax rate should not exceed 1½ per cent of assessed valuation.

For the purpose of apportioning this over-all constitutional rate among local units, the legislature in 1933 established in each county a tax commission of five members: county treasurer, chairman of the board of county auditors if there be such a board otherwise the chairman of the finance or ways and means committee of the county board of supervisors, county school commissioner, one member of a district school board, selected by the judge or judges of probate, and one member, not officially connected with any local unit, similarly selected.

Every unit of local government was required to file its proposed annual budget and tax levies with the county tax commission. The commission examined these budgets and

levies and approved them if it found total tax rates, including state levies, within the 1½ per cent maximum. If proposed total rates exceeded this maximum the commission, after deducting state levies, allocated the remainder of the maximum rate among the various local units according to a statutory formula which guaranteed to counties and school districts a minimum rate of levy. Having made a tentative allocation of rates in conformity to the statute, the commission made a preliminary order fixing the maximum rate for each unit, and gave written notice thereof. After opportunity for a hearing, it issued a final order fixing maximum rates. From this order appeal might be taken to the circuit court by any local unit. Any reallocation order of the circuit court was final.

In 1934 the title of the county allocating agency was changed to county tax allocation board, but no major change was made in the board's composition. Townships, as well as counties and school districts, were thereafter guaranteed a minimum rate in allocation proceedings; and appeal from action of county allocation boards was to the State Tax Commission instead of to the circuit court. This change was apparently made in the belief that members of the tax commission were more familiar with problems of taxation than were the circuit judges, and that the commission would be able to handle appeals more expeditiously than could the courts.

In 1937 another amendment provided for appointment, in at least some counties, of an additional sixth member from some city or village within the county; and port districts were added to the list of local units which are guaranteed a minimum rate in allocation proceedings.

Two trends thus seem discernible in the history of legislation concerning the Michigan county tax allocation board: a tendency to provide more direct representation on the board for cities and villages, and a tendency to reduce progressively the discretionary power of the board in allocation proceedings by making a statutory guarantee of minimum rates to certain classes of taxing units.

Multnomah County, Oregon

An interesting example of an effort to provide some degree of fiscal coordination within a large metropolitan county is afforded by the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission of Multnomah County, Oregon. This agency, first established in 1919, consists of three members appointed by the governor. The act of 1919 conferred upon the commission advisory powers only. Local tax-levying bodies were required to submit their proposed annual budgets to the commission for consideration and hearings. After such consideration the commission advised the various local units as to the budgetary amounts and corresponding tax levies which it recommended for adoption. It was apparently hoped that the force of publicity might induce levying authorities to follow the commission's recommendations. Actually,

however, many of its recommendations were ignored.

Dissatisfied with the results of the commission's weak position, the legislature in 1921 repealed the act of 1919 but re-established the commission with increased power. It was authorized, after consideration of a local budget and hearings, to approve, reject, or reduce any of its items. Its action was made binding upon the levying boards. As interpreted by the commission, the statute conferred upon that agency jurisdiction over the five major local governments within the county—Multnomah County, Portland, Portland school district, port of Portland, and Portland Dock Commission—and a number of lesser municipalities and special districts, but not over minor school districts or joint school districts located only partly within the county.

Despite an earlier decision sustaining its validity,[7] the 1921 statute was declared unconstitutional in 1936 as special legislation and as involving an unreasonable delegation of legislative authority.[8] The Supreme Court took the view that, while it might be reasonable to place counties of over 100,000 population in a class by themselves, it was unreasonable to treat the smaller cities of Multnomah County differently from other Oregon cities of comparable size merely because they were located in a county of over 100,000 population. With respect to the mandatory authority over local budgets and levies which the act sought to confer upon the commission, the court held that the statute was invalid because it failed to establish appropriate standards of action to guide the commission.

In 1939, in the light of the position taken by the Supreme Court, the legislature enacted the present Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission law, in which the commission's jurisdiction was restricted to such municipal corporations within the county as have a population of 100,000 or more. Under this provision the commission now possesses jurisdiction over only the five major local governments mentioned above. In view of the Supreme Court's objection to the delegation of legislative power, the commission's authority was drastically reduced by the 1939 act. It may strike from budgets items which are not authorized by law and may order the reduction of proposed levies which exceed constitutional or statutory maxima. These powers apart, the commission is limited to making recommendations on the budgets and proposed levies submitted to it.

During the fifteen years (1922-1936) when the Multnomah County commission was clothed with mandatory authority to veto proposed local levies which it considered unwise, the commission made an aggregate reduction in such levies of more than ten million dollars. Experience under the 1939 law indicates that the weak-

[7] *Tichner* v. *Portland,* 101 Ore. 294, 200 P. 466 (1921).

[8] *Portland* v. *Welch,* 154 Ore. 286, 59 P. (2d) 228 (1936). An amendatory act of 1923, extending the provisions of the 1921 law to all counties of the state, had been declared unconstitutional for failure to indicate the scope of the amendment in the title. *State* v. *Hawks,* 110 Ore. 497, 222 P. 1071 (1924).

ening of the commission's authority has seriously impaired its effectiveness as a control agency.[9]

Conclusions

Concerning the respective merits of state and local fiscal control there is naturally difference of opinion. Those persons who favor the former stress the desirability of uniformity, and urge that a state agency is better able to deal objectively and impartially with local units. On the other hand, those favoring local control emphasize the importance of local self-government and feel that a local agency is more familiar with local needs.

In this connection it seems that a distinction might well be made between control exercised over matters of policy and that exercised over matters of procedure, and a system set up whereby matters of policy would be controlled by a local agency and procedural matters by a state agency.

Local self-government might be preserved by having local appropriations and tax levies fixed, within constitutional and statutory limits, by a local reviewing agency; while at the same time uniformity in the form of budgets, accounts, and reports might be secured by having those forms prescribed by a state instrumentality.

Should it be desired to establish county agencies for the review and control of local budgets and tax levies, the two principal problems to be met in the planning of the necessary legislation will be the composition of the reviewing agency and the powers to be conferred upon it. With respect to composition, the membership of the board might be *ex officio*, appointive, or elective. Or some of the members might be selected by one method and some by another. Oklahoma abandoned an *ex officio* for an appointive board largely because it was felt that the former was not as much interested in economy as would be a board composed of private taxpayers. On the other hand, notwithstanding some criticism, it appears that the *ex officio* budget commission has given reasonable satisfaction in Ohio.

If appointment is employed as the method of selecting members, the problem is whether the appointing power should be vested in state or in local authorities, and in either case the question as to what agency or agencies shall make the appointments. In the case of the Oklahoma county excise board, the appointing power is divided between state and local authorities. There seems to be some tendency to favor judicial appointment as in Indiana and Michigan. The three members of the Multnomah County commission are appointed by the governor.

None of the existing county agencies is popularly elected, and any proposal to make members elective would immediately be subject to the justifiable criticism that such a plan would operate to lengthen a local ballot already too long. Yet if broad discretionary authority is to be conferred upon the supervising agency,

[9] *Budget Facts and Financial Statistics of Multnomah County, Oregon, for 1940.* Annual Report of the Tax Supervising and Conservation Commission, pp. 5-6.

a case can be made for making the body elective. Indeed, in view of recent court decisions emphasizing the principle that legislative powers may not be delegated to administrative tribunals, it may prove necessary, if the supervising agency is to be vested with policy-determining authority, to establish that agency as an elective "legislative" body.

Another aspect of the problem of composition is the question as to what provision, if any, shall be made for representation on the control agency of different groups and interests within the county. For example, shall an effort be made to give representation to rural and urban groups, citizen and official groups, and the various types or classes of taxing units? Both Michigan and Indiana provide for representation on their county control boards not only of the county government itself but also of municipalities and school authorities. These states also provide for membership on their boards of both local officials and private citizens.

Any of three types of power might be conferred upon a county agency charged with reviewing local budgets and tax levies: advisory power only, power to strike illegal budget items and tax levies, or discretionary power to pass upon the wisdom of budgets and levies and to strike therefrom such items as the reviewing agency may deem unwise or inexpedient.

The experience of the Multnomah County commission, under the law of 1919 conferring advisory power only, seems to indicate that publicity alone affords inadequate means of enforcement. Yet some beneficial results might be secured even through a mere advisory agency. Its operation might serve to familiarize the public with the idea of county-wide coördination and facilitate the strengthening of the agency's authority at a later time if such a course of action were deemed desirable.

If the second alternative should be adopted the reviewing agency would be authorized to strike from proposed budgets and tax ordinances any items in excess of constitutional or statutory limits, or with respect to which proper procedure has not been followed, or which for any other reason are illegal as in Oklahoma and Multnomah County.

In drafting a measure designed to confer power of the third type, great care would need to be taken to prescribe appropriate standards for the exercise of the discretion of the reviewing agency, lest the measure be declared unconstitutional as an unlawful delegation of legislative power.

In conclusion, it should be said that the writer in no sense takes the position that a local control agency is preferable to a state agency in all cases and under all circumstances. He wishes merely to call attention to the fact that the possibilities of control by a county agency, as a practical alternative to state control, have not been adequately explored. The confirmed reformer may scoff and insist that nothing short of state control will suffice. But the political process frequently necessitates compromise; and the taking of half a loaf, when the whole cannot be obtained, may still be the better part of wisdom.

Contributors in Review

GRADUATE work at Harvard and teaching served as the mutual background of **Richard A. Atkins** and **Lyman H. Ziegler** (*Citizen Budgeting in Massachusetts*) for governmental research. Mr. Atkins has been with the Boston Municipal Research Bureau since 1935, now as acting secretary. Since 1938 Mr. Ziegler has been a member of the research staff of the Massachusetts Federation of Taxpayers Associations.

A BEWILDERINGLY varied series of journalistic activities has marked the life of **Stanley High** (*Kansas City Has Its Chin Up*) since he was graduated from the Boston University School of Theology in 1923, culminating now as roving editor of *Reader's Digest*. Before his years of free-lancing for the *Saturday Evening Post* and other magazines, Mr. High served (among other things) as foreign correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor*, editor of the *Christian Herald*, current events lecturer for the National Broadcasting Company, and author of at least eight books. He is the organizer and president of the Good Neighbor League.

MUNICIPAL law is **Barnet Hodes'** (*Effective National Defense and Home Rule*) specialty. Chicago's corporation counsel is a lecturer on municipal corporations at Northwestern University's School of Law and is the author of books and articles on the same subjects. Once he was a city alderman. Mr. Hodes is active in Chicago civic and official bodies, and two years ago was the recipient of the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee award for distinguished service in defense of democracy. The Junior Association of Commerce has also honored him with its Civic Merit Award. He is at present local U. S. defense coördinator for Chicago, by virtue of his position with the Chicago Commission on National Defense, and is a member of the Volunteer Participation Committee of the United States Office of Civilian Defense, for Region VI, by appointment of President Roosevelt.

SYRACUSE, Michigan, New Mexico, and Maryland are some of the universities at which **Howard M. Kline** (*Citizen Groups in Review*) has taught political science. He is now stationed at the latter institution. Earlier work by Dr. Kline includes a study of the methods of congressional investigating committees and numerous articles on civic subjects.

COMPILER of those exhaustive bibliographies in the *American Political Science Review* is **Clyde F. Snider** (*Fiscal Control at County Level*), who spent his last vacation in California where he passed a good part of his time—in a library. Dr. Snider's other job is as assistant professor of political science at the University of Illinois. He has served as consultant to the Indiana State Committee on Governmental Economy and to the Illinois Legislative Council and the Illinois Tax Commission, and has written several treatises and articles in the field of local government.

The Researcher's Digest: October

Thirtieth meeting of the GRA and published papers of the twenty-ninth; suggested research in budgeting; Oregon police reserves; new bureau of urban research.

MEMBERS of the **Governmental Research Association** turned their attention both inward, to re-examine their own purposes, functions, and procedures, and outward, to some of the more pressing governmental problems, at the association's thirtieth conference, held September 3-5, 1941, at Princeton, New Jersey. About 150 persons were in attendance.

GRA awards for 1940-41 were presented at the conference to Harold L. Henderson, Walter L. Mayo, Jr., and Martha Mortenson, all of the Minnesota Institute of Governmental Research, for their *Analysis of Minnesota State Fiscal Operations: 1932-1940*, which was adjudged the year's outstanding piece of research; and to the New Orleans Bureau of Governmental Research, S. S. Sheppard, executive secretary, whose series of bulletins, *Planning for Our Schools,* was considered the most effective presentation of research efforts.

Several sessions were devoted by GRA members to an appraisal of their own work. At one session a group of the "elder statesmen" in the field of governmental research discussed the directions in which governmental research is now proceeding. At another time there were brief statements on the meaning of "citizen concern with government" by six representatives of different types of citizens' agencies. Current activities of agencies in this field were surveyed in the opening "roll call" session. Problems of internal organization, policies, and procedures of citizens' agencies were dealt with in a "quiz program." One paper gave a critical appraisal of the publications issued by governmental research agencies and taxpayers associations.

Blighted areas, budgeting, and forms of municipal government drew the attention of the researchers at three of the conference sessions. Addressing themselves to the question "What can be done about blighted areas?", Russell Van Nest Black, consultant to the Pennsylvania State Planning Commission, discussed the function of planning as a means of prevention; Mabel L. Walker, director of the Tax Institute, considered the economic costs of slums and blighted areas; Leyton E. Carter, director of the Cleveland Foundation, outlined a plan now being worked out for the rehabilitation of blighted sections in Cleveland; and Fred H. Allen, of the Bowery Savings Bank, discussed the difficulties experienced in attempting rehabilitation with private capital in New York City.

Shortcomings in present budgetary practices and the possibilities for better budgeting in local government were canvassed by A. E. Buck of the Institute of Public Administration; Grover Wm. Ensley of the U. S. Budget Bureau; and J. M. Leonard of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research.

Forms of municipal government were analyzed and appraised by Howard Fishack, director of the Bureau of Municipal Research, Newark; Abbett Pulliam, executive vice-president of the Citizens Bureau of Governmental Research for New York State; Clarence E. Ridley, executive director, International City Managers' Association, and others.

Daniel W. Hoan, former mayor of Milwaukee, and now with the United States Office of Civilian Defense, described some of the effects of the national defense program on local gov-

ernment, and urged the need for strengthening local governmental institutions if they are to be preserved.

Some of the problems of governmental finance in the present emergency were discussed by Albert W. Hawkes, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. He emphasized the need for ecomony in non-defense expenditures.

Officers of the association selected for the coming year include W. Earl Weller, director of the Rochester Bureau of Municipal Research, elected chairman of the GRA executive committee; Charlton F. Chute, director of the Governmental Research Institute, St. Louis, named vice-chairman; and Laurence Michelmore of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, secretary-treasurer.

Proceedings of the conference will be issued by the association in the near future as a series of publications, each devoted to one of the major problems considered.

LAURENCE MICHELMORE, *Secretary*
Governmental Research Association

1940 Researchers in Print

Last year's conference of the researchers, the twenty-ninth, has now been preserved in printed form with the publication of the mimeographed *Case Studies in Governmental Research.* The foreword explains that the book is to serve to illustrate the nature of "governmental research," the range of subjects with which it is concerned, the variety of approaches which may be made to a problem, and some of the results which may be secured through "governmental research" techniques. Eleven papers are reproduced, running the gamut of research topics from finance to purchasing to state aid for highways to intermunicipal cooperation to citizen action to municipal consolidation.

150 Questions on Budgeting

Stated in the form of some 150 questions, plus accompanying to-the-point discussion, are the research topics in public budget administration which have resulted from an investigation by the **Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council.** Fifth in a series of similar outlines of research topics in various public administration fields, *Research in Public Budget Administration* is dedicated to the ideal of systematic research in the social sciences. The draft was reviewed by about thirty scholars, administrators, and governmental research men and summarizes all the lines of needed inquiry in the budgeting field.

Volunteers for Law and Order

What about the preservation of law and order in the time of national emergency which many fear is approaching? The **Bureau of Municipal Research and Service of the University of Oregon,** coöperating with the League of Oregon Cities, has summarized the experience of three Oregon cities—Portland, Oregon City, and Salem—with volunteer reserve groups which were organized to meet peacetime rather than wartime situations. The bureau conscientiously lists all the pertinent descriptive facts, including legal authority, numbers, training, equipment, powers of the reserves, and other data. However, *The Organization and Operation of Police Reserves in Three Oregon Cities* makes no comment on the success of the device.

Center for Planning Problems

An advisory committee composed of prominent architects, engineers, and authorities on housing and city planning will supervise a new **Bureau of Urban Research** recently established at

(Continued on Page 592)

National Defense and the Cities

Recent bulletins discuss protection of public buildings and industrial plants, a civilian defense office, and emergency medical service.

By DANIEL W. HOAN

Consultant, Office of Civilian Defense

ANOTHER in the series of bulletins of particular interest to municipal authorities has just been released by the Office of Civilian Defense. The bulletin is entitled *Protection of Industrial Plants and Public Buildings* and outlines specific instructions for the protection of industrial plants, factories, schools, hospitals, business establishments, and public buildings. In a foreword to the pamphlet Mayor F. H. LaGuardia, director of the Office of Civilian Defense, declares:

"It is expected that the general plan outlined in this publication will be adapted by plant managers or local civilian defense authorities to meet local conditions or special needs. Plans should be kept as simple as possible because experience shows that such plans work best in practice.

"Success in the protection of plants and public buildings depends largely upon the thought, preparation, and training done NOW. Plans must be worked out carefully. Personnel with suitable qualifications must be selected for key positions and for the various other tasks involved. Individual training, followed by collective training, is necessary. All personnel should be organized and trained as soon as possible."

Among the special services which the pamphlet describes in connection with such protection of industrial plants and public buildings are: police services, medical services, maintenance services. The pamphlet concludes with a description of detailed requirements of equipment for each individual assigned to particular duty in the plant or building.

Civilian Defense Volunteer Office

Another pamphlet currently released by the Office of Civilian Defense, of especial interest to municipal authorities, is entitled *A Civilian Defense Volunteer Office.* The pamphlet describes what it is, how it is set up, what it does, and how to organize it. In thirty-six pages the pamphlet outlines in great detail the specifications for appraising the community's needs for volunteer service in such fields as health, family security, recreation, social protection, child welfare, consumer information, salvage programs, intergroup good will, safeguarding civil liberties, adult education, patriotic rallies, exhibits, etc.

It shows how the Civilian Defense Volunteer Office will work with the local defense council to survey the community's needs and for the enrollment, routing, and training of volunteers to serve in the particular services.

The pamphlet describes the requisites of such a volunteer office in communities of various sizes as well as in rural sections.

Emergency Medical Service for Civilian Defense

Of especial interest to public health authorities is the bulletin entitled *Emergency Medical Service for Civilian Defense, Bulletin No. 1,* issued by the Office of Civilian Defense. This bulletin outlines in great detail a basic plan

for the organization and expansion of hospital facilities along both seaboards, as well as in the industrial areas in the interior. It describes the rapid expansion of nursing facilities through intensive training of adequate numbers of Volunteer Nurses Aides and other nursing auxiliaries.

In a foreword to the pamphlet Mayor LaGuardia quotes from a similar official bulletin issued in England in 1938, prior to the beginning of hostilities, as follows: "The need for [these measures] is not related to any belief that war is imminent. It arises from the fact that the risk of attack from the air, however remote it may be, is a risk that cannot be ignored, and because preparations to minimize the consequences of attack from the air cannot be improvised on the spur of the moment but must be made, if they are to be effective, in time of peace."

Mayor LaGuardia concludes his preface to the pamphlet as follows: "Whether or not we regard danger to the lives and property of our people as imminent, I would urge that immediate steps be taken to carry out these recommendations of the Office of Civilian Defense in every state along our seaboards and in industrial areas in the interior."

The pamphlet describes the changed technique of warfare predicated upon the bombing of civilians as necessitating preparation for providing medical service to casualties through establishment of medical field units. It declares the organization of such facilities must be a fundamental part of the civilian defense program.

After outlining in diagram form the structure of Emergency Medical Service, the pamphlet describes in detail the basic organization plan under the following topical subheadings.

1. Local Chief of Emergency Medical Service (responsible for coördinating all local emergency medical facilities);

2. Local Medical Advisory Council on Civilian Defense (includes representation from the health department, hospital field, local Red Cross chapter, and municipal and volunteer agencies);

3. Emergency Medical Field Units.

Under each subheading the functions of the several divisions are described in detail.

The pamphlet prescribes the personnel of the Emergency Field Unit, divided into squads on call for each twelve-hour shift, including physicians, nurses and nursing auxiliaries.

The squads are designed for communities of varying population—25,000, 50,000, and 100,000.

The pamphlets described are being distributed to state defense councils through which they will be available to local defense councils and municipal authorities.

Revocation of Licenses

Acting to throw the full support of municipal executives throughout the country behind efforts of Leon Henderson, administrator of the Office of Price Administration, to prevent inflationary price increases, Mayor LaGuardia, acting in his capacity as president of the United States Conference of Mayors, announced he would recommend revocation of municipal business licenses in cases of persistent violation of federal price ceilings.

Mayor LaGuardia pointed out that in most communities the power to issue and revoke municipal licenses is vested in the chief executive. The United States Conference of Mayors is composed of the chief executives of more than three hundred communities of over 30,000 population.

"It is my purpose to call to the attention of executives who are members

of the United States Conference of Mayors all cases of willful and persistent price ceiling violation which are certified to me by Mr. Henderson," Mayor LaGuardia said.

"In these instances, I shall recommend that the violators be cautioned against continuing their infractions. Then, if they still persist, I shall recommend that the full powers of the municipality be exercised to revoke the licenses of the offenders.

"I have been informed by Mr. Henderson that the most careful investigation of complaints reaching his office will be undertaken before I am requested to make my recommendations.

"It is my belief that the coöperation of municipal executives throughout the country in Mr. Henderson's efforts to keep prices down in the face of inflationary pressure will be an invaluable contribution to the entire defense effort and will meet with the hearty approval of the American people.

"By exercising the powers of their office to revoke licenses of those who place personal gain during this national emergency above their obvious duty, municipal executives will be assisting patriotic business men to coöperate with our government and the public in the defense effort."

THE RESEARCHER'S DIGEST

(Continued from Page 589)

Princeton University to collect, organize, and analyze existing data on the problem of cities. Melville C. Branch, Jr., an architect who formerly served with the National Resources Planning Board, has been named director. Functions of the bureau, as listed in its prospectus, are to include "a special analytic reference to documents concerning urban problems and their interactions; creative research designed to discover more of the underlying structural inter-relationships and form of cities, and to stimulate such research elsewhere; clearing house of urban information and research for those concerned with city problems." Conferences and advisory assistance to governmental officials and agencies are planned for the future.

Research Bureau Reports Received

Budget

Research in Public Budget Administration—An Outline of Suggested Research Topics. Committee on Public Administration, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1941. 37 pp. mimeo.

Governmental Research

Case Studies in Governmental Research. Governmental Research Association, Detroit, 1941. 37 pp. mimeo.

Legislation

1941 Laws Affecting Cities. Association of Washington Cities in Coöperation with the Bureau of Governmental Research, University of Washington, Seattle, 1941. 62 pp. mimeo.

Personnel

Baltimore City Personnel, Its Administration and Cost (in three parts). *Your Tax Dollar,* The Commission on Governmental Efficiency and Economy, Inc., Baltimore, August 30, September 2, and September 3, 1941. 13 pp. mimeo.

Police

The Organization and Operation of Police Reserves in Three Oregon Cities. Bureau of Municipal Research and Service, University of Oregon, Coöperating with the League of Oregon Cities, 1941. 20 pp. mimeo.

Public Welfare

The Relief Problem in Minnesota. Minneapolis Research Bureau, an affiliate of the Minneapolis Civic Council, August 1, 1941. 14 pp. mimeo.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor of the National Municipal Review:

Long acquaintance with the excellent work done by O. Garfield Jones in Toledo, in developing his intensely practical program "Effective Citizenship" for college students, has led many people to appreciate profoundly the excellent work which these courses of laboratory investigations represent. It is unfortunate that the same methods are not followed more widely in other colleges and universities. Of course, they depend for their success largely on the right kind of leadership—the kind which Dr. Jones has furnished for many years.

But in his enthusiasm Dr. Jones seems to overstate the case in his letter published in the National Municipal Review for August. Referring to the new practice of observing an annual citizenship day for young people who attain their voting majority of twenty-one years, he says "this is no contribution to the citizenship training of college students." On the contrary, the measure of contribution furnished depends on the amount of preliminary training, class work, etc., which the local committee may provide prior to the citizenship day with its big celebration.

Manitowoc, Wisconsin, has set a national pace by its reasonable observance of citizenship day. Many other cities in adopting the idea have emphasized chiefly the ceremonial pageant of the day itself. Even that observance calls attention to the importance of citizenship and therefore is worthy of commendation. Where training classes often in small number are organized, certainly the whole procedure, though not as effective as the Toledo system, should not really be despised and rejected because it does not accomplish everything that might be desired. "This ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone."

William P. Lovett, *Executive Secretary*
Detroit Citizens League

To the Editor of the National Municipal Review:

To many of your readers, no doubt, the letter of Edward C. Donnelly, Jr., president of the Outdoor Advertising Association of America, in your September issue, seemed a dispassionate and fair defense of the billboard industry's position. Lacking the experience of those who for years have been fighting the billboard blight along the American highway and on the American landscape, they would not catch the significance of many items in his argument. Space fails for an adequate discussion of the many points Mr. Donnelly makes, but certain of them appear in a new light when some of the things Mr. Donnelly omits are supplied.

Mr. Donnelly declares that the billboard industry opposes "legislation which is intended to restrict unduly the outdoor medium." The catch there is "unduly." Now, as always, the industry refuses to define what is "due" or "undue" restriction except in terms which, as a practical matter, would permit billboards *anywhere and everywhere* except in thickly-settled districts legally zoned for residence only. In other words, the industry reserves to itself the right to veto as "undue" any legislation it pleases; and thus far any legislative regulation of the billboard nuisance that has become law, has been passed over the veto of the industry. Its consistent policy has been to block any and all regulation by law, no matter how mild.

Mr. Donnelly repeats the claim that

all attempts to regulate the business are really attempts to destroy. I have been familiar with the billboard fight ever since Mrs. Lawton started it eighteen years ago. I know of no anti-billboard organization in all that time which has adopted, or does now adopt, the purpose Mr. Donnelly attributes to such organizations. The policy of the National Roadside Council is, and always has been, to restrict the business of outdoor advertising to genuine business districts—control not destruction.

Mr. Donnelly suggests that the industry would be willing to accept "non-discriminatory" legislation. That is not surprising in view of the industry's avowed concept of "non-discriminatory." By that the industry means the possession of a legal right, fortified by legislation, to put a billboard anywhere that any other business of whatever nature goes. Many other businesses may be excluded from a district, but if any kind of business whatever remains, billboards must come in. Every gas station, essential even on the most scenic roads, must be flanked by billboards if the industry so chooses. A group of cabins for tourists, although every other form of business be excluded, must open the neighborhood to billboards. Under one of the industry's recent applications of the principle, a single roadside fruit or honey stand would convert a rural district for a half-mile on both sides of the highway into a "business" district. When it is understood that the seemingly fair term "non-discriminatory" means a universal privilege for billboards accorded to no other business, and that only discrimination in favor of billboards is "non-discriminatory," does not the statement take on a different meaning?

"Reasonable" regulation, please note, must also be based upon the consent of the local landowners. By that Mr. Donnelly means the consent of farmers who receive a few dollars for allowing billboards on their highway frontages. The motorists and other taxpayers who pay for the farmers' highways are to have no voice. This local "consent" condition is an adjournment of the matter to the Greek kalends, for unanimous consent can never be obtained. If there are *any* refusals the local landowners have not "consented."

Moreover, "property owners" associations are created and financed by the billboard people, and all the "property owner" need do as a "member" is to write letters to legislators protesting against whatever regulatory legislation happens to be up at the moment whenever the billboard men notify him to write and supply the copy, often over the signature of some dummy in the catspaw organization. I have seen some of these letters written by the billboard people to go out over the name of these pretended organizations.

Mr. Donnelly makes much of the Pennsylvania attempt at coöperation—obviously an attempt to stave off regulation by law. First, let me say that any "coöperation" on the part of the billboard industry there or anywhere is merely a concession under pressure. The growing indignation all over the country against the billboard usurpation of our highways and the widespread bedevilment of the American landscape is having an effect. "Coöperation" on the part of the industry is pure appeasement, without any genuine interest in good planning. Second, the touted Pennsylvania "coöperation," after a year's trial, has not produced satisfactory results from the public point of view, and may yet turn out to be a dismal failure, because the billboard industry, now as ever, will move only so fast as it is shoved.

ALBERT S. BARD, *Counsel*
National Roadside Council

News in Review

City, State, and Nation
Edited by H. M. Olmsted

St. Louis Adopts Merit System

Also changes from election at large to ward plan

AT AN election on September 16 the voters of St. Louis, Missouri, adopted two charter amendments of outstanding importance. The total vote was not heavy, despite much newspaper publicity and active work by interested organizations and individuals. Each amendment, however, received affirmative votes amounting to more than 60 per cent of the total vote cast (60 per cent being necessary for adoption).

An amendment establishing a city-wide merit system carried by 73,035 to 43,747; the other, providing for election of councilmen by wards, carried by 79,187 to 38,313. Total city registration is about 413,000.

The civil service amendment was energetically advocated by a Citizens Committee and the League of Women Voters, and received strong newspaper support. It is regarded as a thoroughly workable and carefully safeguarded arrangement, and a great advance for the city.

On the ward amendment there were sharp differences of opinion among many groups. Under the present sytem election is at large, although one person from each ward is chosen. In the absence of true proportional representation the new amendment is expected to provide a somewhat more representative council than the present system.

Los Angeles Creates Office of Zoning Administrator

Under a recently revised city planning organization, Los Angeles has established the office of zoning administrator—a unique step in municipal zoning and planning, according to the American Society of Planning Officials. This new administrator will relieve the City Planning Commission of the task of dealing with zoning problems brought about by the large building program under way in the Los Angeles area—a task which has been taking most of the commission's time.

Under the new procedure petitions for use of property for a purpose not permitted in a particular area under zoning law will be filed with the zoning administrator, who is authorized to issue a zoning variance if he makes a finding that certain exceptional conditions prevail. Any appeal from the zoning administrator's action will be heard by a newly formed Zoning Board of Appeals. Formerly the City Planning Commission issued variances, which action was reviewed by the City Council.

Departmental Council Established in Milwaukee

On September 10, Mayor Carl F. Zeidler of Milwaukee organized a Council of Departmental Administration (CDA) to consist of the forty or more department and bureau heads of the city government, with Mayor Zeidler as chairman and Norman Gill, municipal reference librarian, as secretary. This council is to become a regular part of the city administration. Its purposes are to confer with the mayor on interdepartmental administrative problems; to determine efficient and economical methods of operation of the city government; to consider possible

economies in the 1942 municipal budget; to devise ways and means of solving some of the critical problems arising out of the effects of the national defense program upon the city government, such as scarce materials, priority lists, personnel needs, etc.; and to formulate recommendations for the consideration of the city's legislative body, the Common Council.

At the first meeting of the council on September 12 the Mayor appointed a committee to study the possible use of substitute materials in municipal public works; and the extent to which maintenance and repair work on existing municipal structures should be curtailed because of the prior needs of the national defense program.

Council-Manager Plan News

A petition for a vote in **Schenectady, New York**, in November, on repeal of the present city manager form of government (Plan C) in that city, has been declared invalid by Justice E. C. Lawrence of the Fourth District Supreme Court. The petition contained 4,779 signatures, of which 1,070 were disallowed by the court, leaving 3,709 valid signatures as against 3,904 required. More than half of those disallowed were stricken because they were not the signatures of qualified voters or were not signed by the actual person. The court stated that any doubt was resolved in favor of the petition. There appears to be no possibility of such an election for at least the present year.

Alderman Ralph T. Mazza, a candidate for the Republican nomination for mayor of **Ithaca, New York**, advocated that the manager plan be studied by the citizens and their representatives with a view to adoption if the claims in its favor are found justified.

In **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**, H. D. Denny, Jr., candidate for the Republican nomination for mayor, endorsed the manager plan for that city.

The **Ishpeming, Michigan,** Industrial Association advocates a referendum on the establishment of the council-manager plan. A committee of the association has submitted a report on the plan, including methods of bringing it before the people.

The Civic Forum of **Seattle, Washington,** is launching an educational campaign for council-manager government.

Nominating Petitions Contested in New York

Indications of widespread irregularities in nominating petitions affecting both the Republicans and Democrats in New York City caused rapid-fire court action just prior to the primary held on September 16. The petitions of John R. Davies, contending for the Republican nomination for mayor with Fiorello H. LaGuardia, were characterized by Justice Ferdinand Pecora of the First District Supreme Court as "saturated with fraud". The petitions had been largely circulated by professional petition-gatherers, and certain petitions showed so many irregularities that Justice Pecora considered them invalid in their entirety, declaring, however, that he did not hold the candidate responsible. He was overruled in quick succession by the Appellate Division and the Court of Appeals, who took the position that there were sufficient valid signatures, including some on the petitions disregarded by Justice Pecora, to authorize a place on the ballot for Davies.

At the primary LaGuardia defeated Davies by a majority of 19,820 in a total vote of 106,672—only 14 per cent of the Republican enrollment.

A somewhat similar controversy arose over the nomination for president of the borough of Brooklyn. John Cash-

more, the Democratic incumbent and nominee, ran in the Republican primary against Matthew J. Troy, who is an independent Democrat, endorsed by the American Labor party. Cashmore's petitions were attacked; the trial court and the Appellate Division found many irregularities but decided there were sufficient valid signatures. Troy won the nomination by a narrow margin.

Municipal Law Officers Queried on Public Strikes

A survey based on questionnaires sent by the National Institute of Municipal Law Officers to city attorneys throughout the country indicated their overwhelming opinion that cities do not have power to enter into contracts with labor unions and that city employees do not have the right to strike. The report, which was issued September 2, states: "Out of 385 municipal law officers to whom the questionnaire was forwarded not one expressed an opinion that a collective bargaining agreement could be lawfully entered into by a municipality."

The questionnaire replies and other data as compiled by Charles S. Rhyne, executive director of the Institute, are briefly summarized as follows:

1. No city has ever signed a collective bargaining agreement with a labor union representing city employees similar to the agreements entered into between private industry and labor unions.

2. Agreements have been signed between a few cities and representatives of labor unions of city employees containing general expressions of policy or good will and good intention toward such employees.

3. Legal opinions of the courts, city attorneys, and state attorneys general declare that cities do not have the power to sign collective bargaining agreements with labor unions representing municipal employees for the following reasons:

a. Power to sign such collective-bargaining agreements has not been delegated to cities, except in a very limited way by the state of Washington.

b. Such agreements would be unlawful and unauthorized delegation of public power to the union, a private organization, over which there is no public control.

c. Such an agreement would, in effect, vest control of the municipal government in an unelected and uncontrolled private organization (the union) and take control from the officials who have been chosen by the public and whose conduct is regulated by law.

d. Such an agreement if it contains a "closed-shop" provision, discriminates between citizens in violation of the federal and state constitutions by preventing all citizens not belonging to the particular union holding the municipal labor contract from having an equal opportunity to obtain public employment. A closed shop is incompatible with the public service as it substitutes the test of union membership for the usual tests of ability, education, efficiency, etc.

e. Such an agreement would supplant civil service requirements with union control in direct violation of law.

f. The declared public policy of the federal, state, and municipal governments is opposed to collective bargaining agreements in public employment.

g. Federal legislation providing for collective bargaining for private industry employees expressly pro-

vides that the legislation does not apply to cities and their employees.

h. City employees have no right to strike to enforce collective bargaining agreements with the city.

4. Differences in the nature of public and private employment make different legislative treatment of such employments a necessity.

5. Public policy makes collective bargaining between government and unions an impossibility.

6. Some city employees belong to labor unions and some city administrations discuss employee problems with union representatives. It is only when formal union recognition or a formal union contract is sought that the problems herein discussed arise.

Chicago's Institute of Public Service

The University of Chicago has announced the establishment of an Institute of Public Service to make special training in various aspects of government available to public officials, public employees, and others in the Chicago metropolitan area. It will be located at the University's downtown college, 18 South Michigan Avenue, and classes, opening October 7, will be held evenings. A certificate of public administration will be awarded students who have satisfactorily completed an approved course and who have attained a bachelor's degree or an acceptable equivalent in terms of public service.

According to President Robert M. Hutchins, the institute is designed for educational assistance to the 125,000 men and women already in the public service in and around Chicago, whether elected or appointive or civil service employees, and also for the thousands of citizens who are responsible for quasi-governmental or civic affairs in Chicago, or who, as experts in business and labor, are subject to governmental regulations or are dependent upon the widening range of governmental functions and services in order to carry on their daily work.

The institute will be headed by Dr. Albert Lepawsky, lecturer in political science at the university, with an advisory committee of twelve experts in governmental, legal, sociological, and educational fields.

Formal courses will include municipal government to be presented by Jerome G. Kerwin, associate professor of political science; public administration, government of Chicago, and defense administration, by Dr. Lepawsky; techniques of public management, by Dr. Clarence E. Ridley, director of the International City Managers' Association; public law and public utility administration, by C. Herman Pritchett, assistant professor of political science; election and party administration, by Harold F. Gosnell, authority on voting practices and associate professor of political science; governmental accounting, by Carl H. Chatters and Irving Tenner, executive director and staff accountant, respectively, of the Municipal Finance Officers' Association; governmental planning, by Walter H. Blucher, executive director of the American Society of Planning Officials; and governmental reporting and communications, by Don Price, assistant director of the Public Administration Clearing House. There will also be public lectures by guest authorities.

Students in the institute may also take complementary courses offered by the School of Business and Division of the Social Sciences in related professional and non-professional subjects.

Pennsylvania Municipal Finance Officers to Train

Preparations have been under way

for some time for the establishment of zone training schools throughout Pennsylvania for municipal financial officers, and for the secretaries and clerks of boroughs—a class of municipality that has existed for 250 years in that state. This is the first training ever to be provided for borough financial officers. Plans were originally laid for the organization of zone schools at a meeting on July 2 in Harrisburg, called by the Public Service Institute of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction.

Preliminary work includes the preparation of manuals as texts for the classes; this has been in progress under the supervision of the Public Service Institute, headed by Dr. Fred W. Hosler. One manual is for general classes in municipal finance, which include financial officers of counties, cities, boroughs, and townships. A manual is also being prepared for borough secretaries and clerks by William Walker of the University of Pennsylvania for the Public Service Institute; he has visited many boroughs in developing the material.

Merit System League in California

In order that appointment and promotion in the public service shall be so far as possible on the basis of merit, to direct public attention to the patronage evil, and to study new methods and procedures in public administration, the California Merit System League was recently formed by civic-minded private persons and representatives of various public personnel agencies and employee groups. The temporary president is Professor John M. Pfiffner of the School of Government, University of Southern California.

Citizen Action

Edited by Elwood N. Thompson

Roundup—

Chalk up another citizen victory for good government. . . . This time it was the **St. Louis Citizens' Committee for the Civil Service Amendment,** with the Mayor of St. Louis as its chairman, which conducted a strenuous campaign resulting in the adoption of a modern civil service amendment to the city charter on September 16.

Never one to let an election or primary day go by without some good advice for the voters, the **Citizens Union of New York** announced its preferences in the limited number of contests in the New York City primaries on September 16. Of chief significance was the union's strong support of Mayor LaGuardia in the Republican primary where his nomination was being contested (unsuccessfully, as it turned out) by John R. Davies.

The **Kiwanis Committee Program for Clubs in 1941** contains as its first plank "participation in every effort . . . to educate for self-government." To carry out this purpose local clubs are urged to sponsor the so-called Manitowoc Plan, the citizenship training program for twenty-one-year-old citizens which culminates in a one-day celebration. Recognition of the importance of all elections is also emphasized and the clubs are advised to promote coöperative movements among all civic clubs to register and get out the vote. The program includes, in addition, recommendations on the holding of open forums, scrutiny of public expenditures to prevent waste, and a number of items not so closely connected with citizenship and local government. All in all, the program strikes us as an

excellent one—specific enough so that any club can get into action immediately, and broad enough to enlist the interest and support of many groups.

A notice in the September 1 issue of the *Wisconsin Taxpayer,* publication of the **Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance,** states that the alliance now has available for sale in book form a summary of all laws passed by the 1941 state legislature. The summary contains a brief statement of the content of each law and a cross-index. . . . At a time when state legislatures are passing more and more laws each year, which busy citizens can scarcely hope to keep up with, the publication of an inexpensive summary such as this one (price fifty cents) sounds like a particularly worthwhile idea.

Once again the **National Association of Civic Secretaries** is making plans for its annual meeting, to be held as usual in conjunction with the National Municipal League's annual Conference on Government. This year's dates, November 17, 18 and 19; the place, St. Louis, Missouri. Any program suggestions will be gratefully received by President Allen H. Seed, Jr., of the **Minneapolis Civic Council.**

R. M. W.

California Commonwealth Club One of Largest in U. S.

The **Commonwealth Club of California** is one of the oldest civic organizations in the United States and unique in its record of membership expansion and influence.

Founded thirty-eight years ago as a "Public Service Club," it soon took its present name, was finally incorporated in 1926, and now has more than four thousand members from all parts of the west.

From the first it was destined to be a medium to which interested citizens could turn to "find the truth and turn it loose on the world." Intelligent political service to the community and to the state became a real possibility as the club developed under the journalistic creed "Get the facts," taken from its founding father, Edward F. Adams.

Plan of Action

The founders recognized the need of intelligent leadership and acknowledged that good men are bound to disagree on many questions. They had entire confidence in each other's regard for the public welfare, however, and desired to organize "to investigate and discuss problems affecting the welfare of the commonwealth and to aid in their solution." The club has maintained itself in an impartial position as an open forum for the discussion of disputed questions. There has never been an attempt to promote ideas or conclusions. It has depended upon the search for and publication of truth as the best means of assisting in the solution of public questions.

Although the club holds lecture luncheons, section luncheons, monthly dinners, and social evenings, it is not a luncheon or dinner or social organization. It is today, what its founders hoped it would be, a purely investigating and reporting body.

Members of the club, exclusively men, are carefully chosen from business, professional, industrial, educational, financial, governmental, and scientific groups in the western part of the country. Naturally, most of the active membership is from the San Francisco Bay area. Members may attend all the meetings of the club including luncheons, dinners, and study section meetings. They also receive all the publications of the club, have use of a well stocked library on public questions, and take advantage of the instruction and inspiration of noted speakers and specialists.

Friday luncheons are perhaps the most widely known, but not the most important, activity of the club. These luncheons, which were inaugurated in 1908, have been maintained in unbroken sequence. Last year sixty-six luncheon meetings were held with a total attendance of over twenty-six thousand—an average of 397.

More than a thousand prominent citizens of the United States and every civilized country have spoken at these luncheons on vital questions of the day. This roster will include every president since McKinley, cabinet officers, royalty, statesmen, foreign diplomats, and professional and business men, yet no speaker has ever been paid an honorarium or expenses.

This forum has been a very desirable sounding board and has provided an excellent field for launching trial balloons. Mr. Roosevelt's keynote speech in 1932 and the trial sound-off of Mr. Willkie before the club in the early spring of 1940 will be remembered by many. Excepting candidates for the presidency, however, the club's forum is traditionally closed to candidates for public office.

National Broadcasts

Friday luncheons are carried by the National Broadcasting Company as a public service feature and are the first of such character to be accorded regular radio time. No restrictions whatever have been placed upon any speaker as to his theme or method of handling his material. No advance script has ever been required. Of over a thousand speakers this freedom has been abused on only two or three occasions when the bounds of good taste and radio standards have been exceeded.

There are twenty-four study sections which held 387 meetings during the past year with a total attendance of well over seven thousand members. These sections, studying almost every conceivable public question, usually meet at lunch and hear speakers on all sides of the problems before them. The deliberations of the sections, usually over a year or longer, will be summarized and discussed, before all the members of the club who wish to attend, at a monthly dinner meeting. These meetings constitute an open forum for presentation of arguments and debate on the more important questions before the club. Reports and all extemporaneous remarks are recorded stenographically and appear in the monthly issue of the *Commonwealth.* They are afterwards bound with the progress report or history of the club for the year in the annual *Transactions.* These *Transactions,* 365 issues since 1925, cover some twenty thousand pages and over three hundred topics.

An important and distinguishing element in the work of the club is that it has always required its study sections to hear all sides of each subject, irrespective of the opinions of the section members. No section or members are allowed to use the name of the club as an endorsement of their ideas. The opinion of the whole club, usually obtained by a postcard vote, can be stated and published only by a vote of the Board of Governors.

Among the concrete accomplishments which have grown out of Commonwealth Club section studies are the state budget law, the small claims court, the office of public defender, the judicial council, permanent registration of voters, absentee voting, state and county civil service laws, convenient voting hours, jury reforms, direct primary, and a new plan for the selection and retention of the judiciary.

It is needless to add that the general reputation of this club throughout the state and country has been sufficient

to place it in the forefront as a leader of public opinion, an *in absentia* influence on the legislature and administrative officers, and an ever-present adviser and help to the voter in facing a long list of initiative or referendum measures presented for his decision. The members of the club are thus carrying on the dual civic duty of instructing themselves in matters of social importance and aiding their fellow citizens in governmental problems.

EDWIN A. COTTRELL
Stanford University

Self Government Committee Urges Democracy in the Schools

My experience in organizing the New York Good Government Clubs had shown the total lack of responsibility for government in the average citizen. In 1903 I urged President Eliot of Harvard, then at the head of the National Education Association, to give me a place on the program of its annual meeting in Boston to discuss self-government in the public schools as a means of civic training. Such a flood of correspondence followed my address that the **National Self Government Committee** was organized to distribute literature and spread far and wide this idea so essential in a democracy.

The late U. S. Commissioner of Education, William John Cooper, said that he was "unable to see how one could train for citizenship in a democracy through a school which was autocratically administered." Since 1904 this committee has carried on a persistent campaign to induce teachers gradually to drop autocratic methods and to develop the spirit of alert citizenship needed in a democracy. This sense of responsibility should be taught by throwing responsibility on the boys and girls so that they acquire the habit and attitude of young citizens coöperating in their own school community, no longer slaves under a dictator but proud to say: "This is our school! We help run it! We are proud of it!"

Teachers, having thus laid a foundation in the early school years, very soon should widen the horizons of their pupils, remind them of their responsibilities when they reach voting age, and interest them in the actual government of their community. Of what use is flag-saluting and teaching government as it is supposed to work without teaching how it does work, and how to prevent the bosses' stranglehold?

No New Idea

The founders of our country five generations ago blazed the trial for a perfectly new kind of public school:

Franklin: "for public service"

Washington: "an enlightened opinion on self-government"

Adams: "for civic and moral duties"

Madison and Monroe: "for government"

Jefferson: "to know what is going on and to make each his part go on right."

They expected us to teach not only the machinery of government but the technique of politics and the part each citizen must take throughout the year in every step leading up to and including the final vote on election day; but as the late Dr. William McAndrew, distinguished educator, said: "The school teachers fell into the old rut of European scholarship standards, syntax, cube root, and other frills, and the democracy planned by the Fathers *has not even been tried.*"

"Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, *deceiving your own selves,*" of course merely means that the best way of learning is *by doing*. Autocratic teachers have failed to make their pupils doers of the word (democracy), and have failed to build the cooperative spirit. These teachers have

been deceiving their "own selves." When once the students have got the attitude and spirit of democratic cooperation through actual practice, they soon realize that it is *their* government they are living under, and interest in the affairs of their own town or county soon follows.

Learning by Doing

How better can a young man be impressed with the need of honest elections as the cornerstone of democracy than by taking a hand in a hotly fought school election and, if he sees his side losing, resisting the temptation to make a false return of the vote?

Under Dr. Schlockow's system of student government, a committee of boys of P.S. 109, Brooklyn, marched down to the City Hall and got the bureau in charge to repave the school street which was full of mud-holes—all this without Dr. Schlockow's knowledge. Space forbids multiplying such instances.

Not only has the National Self Government Committee pioneered in distributing literature to teachers and students, advising how to begin student government, addressing teachers groups such as the National Education Association, and conducting surveys, but it is a clearing house for data on student government and civic training. Requests for information come from teachers and students in all parts of the world.

The committee now has over six thousand associate members, chiefly high school teachers, principals, and college professors, who receive its publications. Two notable pamphlets might here be mentioned: *Civics As It Should Be Taught—Truth About Politics for Tomorrow's Americans,* and *Student Coöperation,* a study of student government in high schools enrolling nearly two million pupils, by Dr. Earl C. Kelley of Wayne University. The committee's chairman meets with discussion groups of high school students thirty or forty times a year in New York City schools.

In the teacher training field Dr. Ambrose Suhrie of New York University, founder of the Eastern States Association of Professional Schools for Teachers, has visited every teacher training college in the country on behalf of this committee, aiding them in their student government problems.

The committee for several seasons organized in a number of towns Junior Cities for young people under voting age, enrolling thousands, to develop an interest in community affairs and fill the gap between leaving school and voting. This project took more time and money than the committee could afford but it should be revived.

The authorities are forever sidestepping the job of making the schools a practice ground for coöperative democracy because so much scholarship is required. They protest that citizenship is the chief aim, yet by their examinations they give scholarship the right of way, in fact the whole road. As no recognition comes to a teacher who devotes extra time to student cooperation and character development, how can we expect any better results?

Of course, back of the apathy of the schools lies the great apathy and ignorance of the public who pay the taxes for education and to whom education simply means "book learning." This public is still shouting to the world our pride in free public education, but in our failure to demand that the schools turn out alert and responsible citizens, are we not deceiving ourselves?

RICHARD WELLING, *Chairman*
National Self Government Committee

County and Township
Edited by Elwyn A. Mauck

New York Assured of County Reform Vote

Mayor signs two bills passed by city council

THE Democratic majority of the New York City Council has passed and Mayor LaGuardia has signed two county reform bills which must now be submitted to the voters in November for final action.

The bills would abolish the offices of the four county registers and the five county sheriffs as of January 1, 1942, and transfer their functions to the respective county clerks and to a city-wide popularly-elected sheriff. It is estimated that the change would save from $250,000 to $500,000 annually.

The bills represent the Democrats' alternative to the county reform measures sponsored by the Citizens' Nonpartisan Committee, the League of Women Voters, the Citizens Union, the New York Lawyers Guild, and other civic groups, which proposed single city-wide offices of register and sheriff to be filled by the mayor from civil service lists. The latter measure has received the number of signatures required to place it on the ballot in November, but it is possible the courts again will find defects in the petition procedure.[1]

Although Mayor LaGuardia signed the Democratic measures in spite of the protest of the citizen groups, he announced his preference for the latter's proposal. He stated that he wished to insure that at least one plan would be submitted to the voters this November.

[1]See NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW, July 1941, p. 447.

Needs of Green County, Wisconsin, Surveyed

The Green County Land Use Committee recently issued a report in which it reviewed the problems believed to be typical in southern Wisconsin rural counties. Major points emphasized included the following:

1. Classification of lands by types and their proper uses;
2. Methods of control of wind and water erosion and the conservation and development of forest lands;
3. Weed and rodent eradication;
4. Improvements in farm buildings, use of fertilizers, dairying methods, and general farm management;
5. Extended use of farm credit agencies;
6. Extension of the activities of AAA, REA, and the WPA as a farm employment office;
7. Development of long-term farm leases to encourage the tenant to maintain the farm in better condition; and
8. Improved education through extension of 4-H work and consolidation, building modernization, and revised curricula in the schools.

Colorado Counties Join Tax Collection Campaign

With a total expenditure of $900—$720 by the counties and $180 by the state—Colorado has collected between $500,000 and $1,000,000 in delinquent personal property taxes during the first two months of a joint "advertising" campaign. As reported by the Municipal Finance Officers' Association, the campaign consisted of one notice in each of the 171 newspapers of the state to the effect that personal property taxes were due, and spot broadcasting over the fourteen radio stations throughout the state.

Taxation and Finance
Edited by Wade S. Smith

Defense Public Works Program Begins

Federal funds aid cities in construction made necessary by national emergency

FEDERAL aid for the numerous communities unable to cope alone with public construction necessitated by the national defense program began in earnest on August 18, when the government announced presidential approval of the first group of applications made available through a $150,000,000 Congressional appropriation. To September 16 a total of 121 projects had been approved, involving an estimated $31,557,931 of improvements.

The federal appropriation was made at the insistence of representatives of municipal officials and other organizations who pointed out that in many communities local resources were not adequate to handle additional water, sewer, school, highway, hospital and other construction necessitated by the national defense program. Many small towns found themselves forced by the erection of a military camp or big industrial plant to provide facilities and services for many times their normal population, while not a few larger communities had to undertake expansions far in excess of any requirements which might be expected to develop within decades. In some of the situations it was wholly out of the question for local government to finance the required construction. In others, it could be done only by straining local resources to the breaking point for what is essentially a nation-wide purpose.

The projects approved to mid-September reflect the purposes of the appropriation and give also some indication of the most urgent needs. Of the 121 applications approved, forty-nine were for new schools or school additions, and twenty-eight were for water, sewer, and combined water-sewer systems. Thirty were for recreation or community center buildings or additions in communities where army camps nearby pose urgent leisure-time problems for soldiers and government officials alike. The remaining fourteen projects were varied, with hospitals, hospital additions, and health centers predominating.

Funds Distributed

A few days after approval of projects began, the actual allocation of funds got under way. By September 16 funds had been allocated to sixty-six projects, for a total of $14,564,497. Of this amount $11,028,190 represented grants (and in a few cases loans) of DPW funds, and $2,345,647 was the sponsors' share, the difference representing additional assistance to come from the federal agency later on.

A sampling of the projects for which funds have been allocated provides an interesting commentary on the apportionment of funds to the various types of construction. Out of thirty-six projects having an estimated cost of $8,250,000, nineteen having an estimated cost of $4,634,000 were schools, seven were water and sewer systems having an estimated cost of $2,565,000, six were recreation projects estimated to cost $511,000, and the remainder were hospitals and health centers. Sponsors' shares of the school projects totaled $1,229,000 and of the water and sewer systems $447,000; the recreation centers were financed entirely by the DPW.

Most of the projects will be operated by the sponsor without additional help

from the federal government, but not a few of the projects, especially schools, will require DPW assistance for operation and maintenance. The recreation centers will be operated in the main by the USO or by local civic groups.

Applications for grants exceed many times the funds available, according to Federal Works Administrator John M. Carmody, who is in charge of the defense public works program also. Applications to mid-September totaled close to $500,000,000. It is said, however, that a large number of the applications are for projects plainly outside the purposes of the appropriation, many communities having apparently failed to grasp the purpose of the program.

Long-Term Financial Programs Studied

The long-term spending programs developed since 1916 by a number of cities to help them through depression and prosperity years can be used as models by cities planning for operation on a pay-as-you-go basis during the national emergency period, says the Municipal Finance Officers' Association of the United States and Canada in discussing a recent study by the Milwaukee Municipal Reference Library.[1]

Cities would avoid difficulties in obtaining needed public works materials scheduled for other purposes under the priorities system and would bolster their post-war economy by putting such programs into operation immediately. Such a program, properly developed, would give public officials a means of controlling capital expenditures. It would enable cities to take advantage of a general economic situation, spending in times of depression and conserving in times of relative prosperity.

The Milwaukee Municipal Reference Library's study of long-term spending programs in thirty cities shows that agencies undertaking long-range programs vary from city to city; finance officers, mayors, city managers, commissions, planning boards, and public works officials have all been sponsors. The present tendency is to make the city council or the chief executive responsible for determining over-all policies, with technical responsibility resting with the finance and budget officers, the public works department, and the city planning agency.

Previous to 1930 the usual practice was for cities to prepare long-term programs for a fixed period of time—five to ten years. Since then a majority of the successful programs have been of the continuous type; the program is reviewed and revised annually and a year added to replace the year just elapsed.

Scope of Programs

Improvement programs cover a wide scope—from plans covering activities in a single department or function, such as those of the Library Board in Seattle and the School Board in Milwaukee, to comprehensive long-term plans embracing all financial operations of a city. Between, there have been plans for improvements financed exclusively by bonds or special tax levies or covering all improvements or all capital expenditures. Methods of partial financing include the levy of a special millage tax for improvements or allocation of a fixed sum over a period of years to be obtained by special levies.

Illustrations of the size of improvement programs of the past are St. Louis' six-year non-continuous $76,000,000 program of 1923; Kansas City's ten-

[1] *Long Term Improvement Programs in American Cities.* By Norman N. Gill. Municipal Reference Library, Milwaukee, 1941. 20 pp. mimeo.

year non-continuous $50,000,000 program of 1933; Dallas' five-to-nine-year non-continuous $24,000,000 program of 1927; and the original figure of "desirable improvements" totaling $55,000,000 listed in the 1936 Milwaukee program, which was reduced to a recommended $17,000,000 in the final program submitted to the Board of Estimates.

Examples of long-term financial programs cited in the Milwaukee study include:

Dallas: 1940 six-year continuous program prepared by the assistant director of finance—the administrative head of the finance department—assisted by the National Resources Planning Board. The program covers all revenues and all expenditures and is administered by the city manager.

Washington, D. C.: 1933 six-year continuous program prepared and administered by the city commissioners, covering all revenues and spending.

New York City: 1938 six-year continuous program prepared and administered by the city planning commission on an annual capital budget review and revision basis, covering all revenues.

Spokane: 1939 six-year continuous program prepared by the public works commissioner, administered by the commissioner and the city finance director, covering all expenditures and revenues.

Seattle: 1940 six-year non-continuous program prepared and administered by the city library board, covering library revenues and expenditures.

Cincinnati's Joint Plan

An example of long-term programming carried on jointly by independent but overlapping units of government is in the Cincinnati area. A joint bond program committee, representing the city, the school district, and the county, prepares each year a combined five-year bond improvement program for the three governmental bodies. The committee coördinates the three programs so that improvements will be constructed in order of importance yet insure a reasonable tax rate. The joint committee, in preparing a five-year bond program each year since 1927, considers the priority of improvement projects to be financed by bond issues and the effect on future tax rates of bond issues.

Historically, the 1916 Milwaukee and Minneapolis school building programs are believed to be the first long-term financial and improvement plans prepared in the United States, and the 1919 Newark program apparently was the first to include all expected income and outgo of municipal revenue. Following the World War many cities, faced with unusual public improvement needs due to capital expenditure moratoriums during the war, developed long-term programs, including St. Louis, 1923; Dayton, 1924; Detroit, 1925; and Toledo, 1926.

Examples of plans prepared during the "prosperity" years are the programs of San Francisco, Buffalo, Dallas, and Duluth, all in 1927; St. Paul and San Diego, in 1928; and Los Angeles, 1929. During depression years programs were prepared by Kansas City, 1931; Detroit, 1937; Washington, D. C., 1933; and Boston, 1939.

Fiscal Effects of Gas Rationing Studied

Imposition in the eastern seaboard states of the gasoline curfew, followed by the actual rationing of dealers' stocks, has led to a great deal of speculation regarding the possible effects of reduced gasoline consumption on state gasoline tax receipts. Fortunately—for the matter is important—there is now available a brief but comprehensive

survey evaluating the potential problems which severe gas rationing might pose for the seventeen eastern states affected.[1]

Starting out to examine the degree by which gasoline tax revenues might be diminished by a hypothetical 30 per cent reduction in gasoline consumption in the eastern states, Miss Edna Trull, who prepared the study, points out that the problem is really one of state revenue structures or systems. The gasoline tax, translated into terms of governmental revenues, is varied in its impact from state to state. It is significant, however, that in only one state, South Carolina, would a 30 per cent drop in gasoline consumption be accompanied by gas tax revenue constriction which would pose a problem too difficult to be temporarily solved by a reduction in highway construction. Elsewhere gas tax revenues pledged for highway debt service as well as other fixed commitments would be adequately if not always generously covered despite the hypothetical reduction, especially with curtailment of part of the ordinary highway construction programs.

Staunton's Quarter Century of Self-Insurance

During the past twenty-five years Staunton, Virginia, pioneer manager city in 1908, has been carrying on a remarkable experiment in self-insurance. In 1916 the councilmen of this Shenandoah Valley community of 13,337 inhabitants, feeling that the cost of insurance with private carriers was out of proportion to the benefit received, resolved to establish the insurance sinking fund on which the present scheme is based. Today the fund has a balance of $62,300, although the city's contributions have totaled only $48,000. Interest from the fund not only has paid all claims charged against it but also has added $14,300 to principal.

The Staunton insurance sinking fund embraces all types of coverage except fire insurance. City officials, however, deem that the time is nearly ripe to extend the coverage so as to include fire insurance, too. When this step is taken Staunton will have a complete system of municipal self-insurance.

The plan of the founders of the insurance scheme was to make an annual contribution to the fund of $1,000. After two years, however, as a result of a statute requiring the city to carry workmen's compensation insurance, the contribution was increased to $2,000. Each year since that time this sum, along with the interest from the preceding year, has been deposited in the fund. Last year the interest on that portion of the fund which is invested in United States treasury bonds amounted to $1,120.

For the past ten years total claims against the fund have averaged $639.17 per year. Workmen's compensation claims have accounted for 61.7 per cent of this amount, public liability claims 20.5 per cent, and court costs the remaining 17.8 per cent. Nine tort claims have been paid from the fund. These have ranged from 49 cents to $600, with the average claim amounting to $145.78. The cost of similar coverage in a private company would have been in excess of $3,000 per year. By carrying its own insurance, the city has enjoyed a savings of about 80 per cent, not including interest.

George A. Warp
Bureau of Public Administration
University of Virginia

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[1] *The Effects of Gasoline Rationing on State and Local Governmental Finance*: A Survey of Potential Problems in the Atlantic Seaboard States. Municipal Service Department of Dun & Bradstreet, Inc., New York, 1941. 26 pp. mimeo.

Proportional Representation
Edited by George H. Hallett, Jr.
(This department is successor to the Proportional Representation Review)

Approaching P. R. Elections

An Answer to Dr. Hermens P. R. Meeting in St. Louis

ON NOVEMBER 4 seven American cities will hold their regular biennial P.R. elections. All will elect city councilmen by P.R. and Cambridge, Massachusetts, which will be using the method for the first time, will elect school committee members by P.R. also.

The "Plan E" law under which Cambridge is operating makes nomination exceptionally easy, only fifty signatures of voters who have signed no other petition being required, and a large number of aspirants is in the field. The Cambridge Committee for Plan E, which led the campaign for the adoption of the plan under the chairmanship of Dean James M. Landis of Harvard Law School, is preparing to back a representative slate of not more than nine candidates on whom it hopes to concentrate the support of the forces of good government.

Similar efforts are being made by citizen committees in most of the other P.R. cities.

In New York the Citizens' Non-Partisan Committee, with a distinguished personnel headed by Thomas D. Thacher, chairman of the commission which drafted the present charter, and including Samuel Seabury, Charles C. Burlingham, and Charles E. Hughes, Jr., is backing a fusion council ticket against the Democratic organization majority for the third time.

The ticket is a strong one made up of regular nominees of two of the three recognized parties, the Republican and American Labor, and independent members of all three. It includes Borough President Stanley M. Isaacs of Manhattan, who was denied renomination for his present office by the Republicans and is running independently for council; the council's minority leader, Mrs. Genevieve B. Earle of Brooklyn, independent Republican, and Councilman Robert K. Straus, independent Democrat, both of whom have been twice elected under P.R. without major party organization support; Councilman Harry W. Laidler of Brooklyn, who has been denied a redesignation as an official candidate of the American Labor party but is generally considered one of the council's ablest and most conscientious members; Frank S. Hackett of the Bronx, founder and head master of the Riverdale Country School; Dr. George S. Counts of Manhattan, professor of education at Columbia University and president of the American Federation of Teachers; former Minority Leader Andrew R. Armstrong of Brooklyn and Councilman Salvatore Ninfo of the Bronx, labor union leaders; former Councilman Charles Belous of Queens, running as a candidate of the City Fusion party.

In Cincinnati the Republican organization and the City Charter Committee, supported by Democrats and independent Republicans, each with four present councilmen, are once more the chief contenders, with Rev. Herbert Bigelow, independent, also running for re-election.

In Yonkers the City Manager League with two present councilmen, the Democratic organization with two, and the Republican organization with one, are each presenting tickets. During the past two years the three party regu-

lars on the council have stood together against the two independents on most controversial issues. A spirited battle for control is under way.

The other cities with P.R. elections are Toledo and Hamilton, Ohio; and Boulder, Colorado.

A Book Against P. R.

The following letter was printed in the *New York Times* of August 7:

To the Editor of the New York Times:

I noticed your recent review of the book *Democracy or Anarchy?* by Dr. F. A. Hermens of Notre Dame, crusader against proportional representation, and have since been reading the book.

By an amazing line of argument Dr. Hermens tries to beguile workers for better city government back to support of the plurality system and to a belief that P. R. is an obstacle to their progress. He even goes so far as to argue that opponents of Tammany Hall would have been better off here in New York without P. R. in the "off-year" election of 1939, when the Democratic organizations made a clean sweep of every office in the city that was elected by the plurality system, but had to yield one-third of the places on the City Council to representatives of minorities under P. R.

On this point the "municipal reformers" themselves, in the cities that have had experience both with P. R. and with plurality elections, are better authorities than Dr. Hermens. They are almost unanimous in their support of P. R. And the voters like it too. P. R. has been upheld in twenty-one of the twenty-three referenda so far held on its retention in American municipalities.

Actually nearly all of the American cities which have P. R. councils are among the best-governed cities in the country. And in all of these cities except New York the quality of the whole city government is dependent on the P. R. council, because the council not only determines policies but hires a city manager to carry them out.

More Representation Obtained

Your account quotes Dr. Hermens as "pointing out that with 27 per cent of the first preference vote in 1937, the independent vote did not elect a single candidate." This apparently refers to the various unattached and unrelated candidates who were not designated on any ticket, though for some reason it arbitrarily excludes James A. Burke, who ran with no designation whatever after his name and was easily elected.

It is of course absurd to consider this miscellaneous group as if it were a party or slate, for no one was urging support of it as such. A large part of those who cast the first preferences in question cast other choices for regular Democrats, Republicans, Laborites, or Fusionists and got representation by helping to elect them. In all a half-million more voters got representation that year by voting successfully for councilmen than were ever able to help elect aldermen under the old system.

Your paraphrase of Dr. Hermens' argument goes on to cite his contention that P. R. "operates against the more loosely organized reform groups," presumably because they scatter their votes more than the regulars and more of their ballots become exhausted through having no choice marked for a candidate with a chance of election. But, in spite of exhausted ballots, the opposition to the Democratic organization elected a full half of the council under P. R. in 1937, while the same day under the plurality system it elected only one-fifth of the city's assemblymen and one-eighth of its delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

Your account then proceeds with Dr. Hermens' statement that "Detailed

proof of alphabetical and racial voting was found by a committee of the State Constitutional Convention." The committee referred to was not a committee of the convention but a committee, of which I was a member, appointed by Governor Lehman to prepare material for the use of the convention. The committee did not act on the P. R. chapter referred to, but simply asked Assemblyman Steingut to present the case against P. R. and me to present the case for it.

Mr. Steingut presented figures on the transferred votes to show that substantial numbers of voters, though still a decided minority of the whole, had expressed a subsequent choice for a candidate of the same racial origin as a candidate for whom their ballots had been counting before he was defeated. It would have been surprising, in the light of racial influence in other elections, if this had not been so.

He also showed that when a candidate was declared defeated, the candidate just below him frequently got a considerable number, though seldom a really large percentage, of his votes on transfer. This does not seem to me to indicate blind alphabetical voting, as Mr. Steingut and Dr. Hermens assumed, but rather that some of the voters had little choice among some of the candidates they liked and so numbered them in the order in which they appeared on the ballot.

Dr. Hermens' whole argument is strictly a case of special pleading. Whenever anything goes wrong in a place using P. R., it is laid at the door of P. R. Whenever anything goes right, it is explained by other causes.

Eire's Experience Cited

Thus in his native country of Germany, which had an inferior form of party list system of P. R. (very different from the system used in New York) under the Weimar Republic, the advent of Hitler is charged to the supposed divisive effects of P. R. But in Eire (Southern Ireland), which under a form of P. R. similar to ours has progressed in the direction of the two-party system and now has a strong single-party government with a large working majority, P. R. is given no credit for the development. The very brief use of a list system of P. R. in Italy before Mussolini—too brief to prove anything—is magnified, while the notable successes of P. R. governments over many years in the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, and Switzerland are minimized.

Dr. Hermens' theory boils down to a contention that people must not be given freedom to elect the representatives they really want on any basis they may choose, as they can under P. R., because if they can they will be sure to use their freedom unwisely and follow after all sorts of false gods; they must be forced to compromise and be represented by some one who can be accepted by a plurality of those in their particular district—only thus can a desirable unity be developed.

This philosophy of unity through compulsion is strangely akin to the totalitarianism which Dr. Hermens, like the rest of us, detests. He has insufficient faith in the fundamental soundness of civilized people. He does not really think they can be trusted.

When forced by the election machinery that Dr. Hermens favors to put up with representation by the largest organized group, as in the old Board of Aldermen or the present Jersey City Commission, our people have frequently suffered from political dictatorships that were little credit to democratic institutions, and, far from uniting them behind the government, developed feelings of hopeless frustration or cynical indifference. But when allowed a free

choice of representatives in proportion to their numbers they have invariably, in spite of some mistakes, chosen representative bodies of better calibre than they were able to under the plurality plan.

The unity and strength of free citizens fully represented and openly debating their conflicting claims transcends anything that can be secured through the compulsion of an election method that wastes your vote if you don't go with the crowd. As Canon Luce, professor of moral philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin, put it in summing up the effect of P. R. in Ireland:

"The voice of reason is heard, and the gun is silent. P. R. deserves much of the credit; for P. R. produces contented and loyal minorities, whereas the other system breeds muzzled, sullen, discontented minorities, predisposed to doctrines of violence. P. R. has been a unifying force and unity is strength."

GEORGE H. HALLETT, JR., *Secretary*
Citizens Union of the City of New York

St. Louis Adopts Ward Plan

St. Louis voters adopted the ward plan of electing councilmen at the special election on September 16.[1] This postpones the immediate consideration of P.R. predicted in our last issue by Father Edward Dowling, in case the ward plan were defeated; but since it represents a successful revolt against political machine monopoly of the council under the block vote plan, it may be expected, in the opinion of P.R. advocates, to pave the way for a further step to P.R. as soon as the usual shortcomings of the ward plan develop.

Annual P. R. Meeting

The annual meeting of the Proportional Representation League, Inc., now operating as a department of the National Municipal League, will be held at the Hotel Statler, St. Louis, on November 18, in connection with the National Municipal League's Annual Conference on Government to be held at the same place November 17-19. The program, which will be sent shortly to all members and interested persons, will include reports on the P.R. elections to be held in seven cities on November 4.

Any member of the National Municipal League may become a member of the P.R. League, with the right to participate in the annual election of trustees and other League business, by sending his application to Elsie S. Parker, National Municipal League, 299 Broadway, New York City.

[1] See also p. 595 this issue.

CITIZEN GROUPS IN REVIEW

(Continued from Page 578)

ment is a history of the intermittent rise and fall of indignation associations. Too often have a few prominent persons led the hosts of reform to rise and crush the "city hall gang"; then, for the want of a continuing program, the leaders retire and the organization disbands.

The moral seems to be that, if the citizen organization in Hometown is to be a permanent instrument and is to remain a potent factor in municipal politics, it must have more than a negativistic nucleus. It must have a continuing program of constructive proposals to engage its energies the year round.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This is the first section of a comprehensive article on citizen organization. The second and final installment will appear in the November issue of the REVIEW.

Books in Review

Edited by ELSIE S. PARKER

Public Relations of Public Personnel Agencies. A Report Submitted to the Civil Service Assembly by the Committee on Public Relations of Public Personnel Agencies, William E. Mosher, Chairman. Chicago, Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada, 1941. xviii, 259 pp. $2.50.

Governmental public relations practice is emerging from the kindergarten stage, and this book is the happy, tangible token of the promotion. Elton Woolpert's pamphlet on *Municipal Public Relations* (reviewed in these pages January 1941) was the first indication that governmental units are interested in going to "school" to learn how they may reach that all-important democratic public. This Civil Service Assembly report takes a long stride forward, for in addition to presenting an intelligent armchair discussion of what's to be done by the agency along the lines of reports, the newspaper, the radio, movies, personal contacts, speeches, exhibits, it scratches the surface of practical experimentation to determine what the *public* wants done along those lines.

The emphasis on the "two-way street" that is governmental public relations is probably the book's most important contribution. The authors, who include persons highly qualified in research, civil service, and public relations, are strong in the realization that there are many different publics to be reached by a personnel (or any other governmental) agency; that the knowledge, attitudes, habits, desires, and needs of those publics must be a prime consideration in the shaping of any public relations policy. Highly interesting is the account of various polls and surveys undertaken lately under the auspices of the Maxwell Graduate School at Syracuse University to determine public reaction to several civil service reports and to civil service practice in general. While admittedly inadequate because of the small, unrepresentative samples which were used, the surveys are a genuine pioneering effort.

Those chapters which are devoted to the principles of public speaking, radio programming, newspaper technique, and the like are the weakest in the report. Soundly intelligent though they may be, they are still in the main statements which are to be found in any good public relations text of general application.

The book is strong in its suggestions for methods of reaching particular publics who are already for one reason or another interested in good government, civil service, or government jobs. Lacking is a forthright attack on the problem of reaching the man or woman in the street who pays the bills, pulls down the levers at election time, and spends his spare time not at meetings of civic groups nor even in listening to educational programs on the radio, but at the movies or with the evening paper. The report skirts this question many times, admits that most of the techniques discussed will not register with the average John Jones, stresses that the support of this amorphous public is essential to the merit system (or to any other government enterprise), yet never embarks on a full discussion of what is to be done. This is, perhaps, a job for the next public relations pioneer.

In general, however, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that *Public Relations of Public Personnel Agencies* is a "must" handbook not only for civil service officials but for all government officers who care about the be-all and end-all of their jobs.

M. R.

British Cities at War. By James L. Sundquist. Chicago, Public Administration Service, 1941. 110 pp. $1.

This is a highly instructive and timely publication. Its value lies in what it reveals about a government structure forced to perform mightily under conditions of great stress. It not only presents an insight into the techniques developed to handle the multitude of confusing emergency problems arising out of economic and military mobilization and aerial bombardment, but it shows how the whole war situation has brought into sharp relief the structural and functional weaknesses of English local government.

The document is made up largely of direct quotations from British periodicals supplemented by interviews with first-hand observers and other available materials. The material is organized to focus on certain key problems —planning, organization, finance, volunteer work, and special problems. The "pre-raid" civil defense structure is compared with the "post-raid." This comparison illustrates the complex confusion of English local government to begin with, the values and inadequacies of plans for coördination confined largely to paper, the difficulty of foreseeing and realizing the chaos created by large scale modern bombing, the failure to anticipate certain types of problems all together—such as providing information centers to direct the homeless and inform relatives and friends about persons in bombed areas.

A great many of the problems dramatized by the emergency lie in the realm of interjurisdictional relations and were present in peace-time though often easily ignored. All sorts of horizontal relations were involved in policing, fire protection, first aid, salvage, and the like. Likewise the relations between local and central governments were forced to undergo substantial change. The cost of raids, destruction of life and property, obliteration of large portions of local rate-paying capacity, the uneven distribution of the loss among local governments, and other factors placed great stress on the development of more adequate systems of financial aid for local governments.

In addition to matters of this sort the report explains the very important part played by volunteer organizations; presents the controversy over types, locations, and equipment of air raid shelters; describes the handling of particular problems such as evacuation, blackout, care of homeless and injured, etc. A chapter is devoted to what is happening to "normal municipal functions."

It is this reviewer's opinion that this valuable report should be read for what it has to teach about government rather than for specific techniques on what to do in an air raid. In the United States the civil defense movement has already over-emphasized the example of London and the fear of physical invasion or possible bombing. Our problem is to tackle those governmental problems a solution for which will strengthen the whole fabric of government for the performance of its regular work and for meeting either a war crisis or a post-war crisis.

HARVEY PINNEY
New York University

Additional Books and Reports Received

Accounting

Governmental Accounting Bibliography. Chicago, National Committee on Municipal Accounting, 1941. ix, 61 pp. Fifty cents.

Assessments

A Decade of Assessed Valuations: 1929-1938. Washington, D. C., Bureau

of the Census, Department of Commerce, 1941. 31 pp.

Citizenship and Democracy

The American Citizens Handbook. Arranged by Joy Elmer Morgan. Washington, D. C., National Education Association, 1941. 366 pp.

Democracy in American Life. By Avery Craven. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1941. xi, 150 pp. $1.

Educating Youth for the Responsibilities of Citizenship. Proceedings of a Conference Held in Rochester, New York, May 8, 1941, under the Auspices of Educational Policies Commission and the Rochester Public Schools. Washington, D. C., Educational Policies Commission, 1941. 33 pp. mimeo.

How to Be an Active Citizen in a Democracy. A Directory of Agencies Through Which Citizens May Work Voluntarily in the Service of American Democracy. With an Introduction by George V. Denny, Jr. New York City, Town Hall, 1941. 104 pp. Fifty cents.

An Organized Proficient Electorate the Only Answer. By Clifford R. Allen. Washington, D. C., 1941. 78 pp. $1.25. (Apply to author, International Building, Washington, D. C.)

Debt

American State Debts. By B. U. Ratchford. Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, 1941. xviii, 629 pp. $5.

Defense

After Defense What? Full Employment, Security, Up-Building America. Post-Defense Planning. By National Resources Committee. Washington, D. C., Superintendent of Documents, 1941. 19 pp.

Effect of Defense on Municipal Finance. Chicago, Municipal Finance Officers' Association of the United States and Canada, *Municipal Finance*, August 1941. 32 pp.

Guns, Planes and Your Pocketbook. By Rolf Nugent. New York, Public Affairs Committee, 1941. 32 pp. Ten cents.

Portsmouth and National Defense. A series of articles reprinted from the *Portsmouth Herald*. Portsmouth, N. H., *The Portsmouth Herald*, 1941. 95 pp.

Elections

Presidential Elections by Pennsylvania Counties 1920-1940. By H. F. Alderfer and Robert M. Sigmond. State College, Council on Research, Pennsylvania State College, 1941. vi, 61 pp. Fifty cents.

Housing and Rent Control

Graded versus Proportional Rents in Public Housing. A Discussion of Their Advantages and Disadvantages with Fourteen Plans Proposed or in Operation. By Beatrice Greenfield Rosahn. New York, Citizens' Housing Council of New York, 1941. 59 pp. mimeo. Fifty cents.

Housing in Denver. A Report on the Real Property and Low Income Housing Area Survey. Prepared with the Coöperation of the Housing Authority of the City and County of Denver and the Work Projects Administration. Denver, Bureau of Business and Social Research and the School of Commerce, Accounts, and Finance of the University of Denver, 1941. 56 pp.

Rent Levels During the Defense Program. A Study on Rent Regulations. By Julius Fischer. New York, 1941. 68 pp. mimeo. (Apply to author, New School for Social Research, New York City.)

Labor

Power of Municipalities to Enter into Labor Union Contracts—A Survey of Law and Experience. By Charles S. Rhyne. Washington, D. C. National Institute of Municipal Law Officers, 1941. 78 pp. $2.[1]

The Public and Strikes. New York, Council for Democracy, 1941. 38 pp. Ten cents.

State Government

Final Report of Committee on State Organization to the Governor and the Legislature of California. A Voluntary Study with Recommendations by a Committee of Citizens, Based Mainly upon Reports and Recommendations of Griffenhagen and Associates. San Francisco, Interim Committee of Twenty-five of the California Conference on Government and Taxation, 1941. 90 pp.

[1]For a discussion of this publication, see p. 597 this issue.

Taxation and Finance

Income Taxes in Oklahoma. A Study of Taxable Corporation and Individual Returns. Compiled by Division of Research and Statistics. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma Tax Commission, 1941. x, 55 pp., tables. mimeo.

Long Term Improvement Programs in American Cities. Report Submitted at Request of Board of Estimates. By Norman N. Gill. Milwaukee, Municipal Reference Library, 1941. 20 pp. mimeo.[2]

A Majority of New Jersey Municipalities Again Reduce Their Property Tax Levies. Newark, New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce, 1941. 8 pp. mimeo.

Wrestling with Excises. Philadelphia, Tax Institute, 1941. 16 pp. Twenty-five cents.

Tort Liability

Local Government Responsibility in Tort in Louisiana. By Jefferson B. Fordham and William T. Pegues. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1941. 38 pp. 25 cents; additional copies 10 cents.

Trailers

House Trailer Regulation. Chicago, American Municipal Association, 1941. 48 pp. mimeo. $1.

Mobile Homes: A Study of Trailer Life. By Donald Olen Cowgill. Washington, D. C., American Council on Public Affairs, 1941. vii, 127 pp. $2.00.

Suggested Ordinance for the Regulation of Trailer Coach Parking and Trailer Parks. Washington, D. C., Consumer Division, Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply, 1941. 12 pp. mimeo.

EFFECTIVE NATIONAL DEFENSE AND HOME RULE

(Continued from Page 567)

to undertake ventures which are opposed to the greater welfare of the state as a whole. Yet it is equally unjust, as well as inefficient, to subject—as is done in the case of my own city—an area of three and a half million people to the arbitrary rule of the same number of people outside the city.

What is true in the case of Chicago applies with equal force to smaller cities. Municipalities are the hubs of defense production. Huge arsenals and munitions factories and automotive works are located within their boundaries. To deny these cities the right to administer their local affairs as befits local conditions is not only an injustice, it is in these times a bottleneck of defense activity. It is in a large sense an obstruction to our declared national policy of all-out preparedness.

Our legislators are faced with many grave duties in these trying times. But despite their efforts to aid in the nation's defense, they will be remiss in their duty if they fail to give the cities of America an opportunity to carry their share of the defense responsibility. For the whole can be no greater than the sum of its parts; and the success of the nation's defense efforts depends, in a final analysis, upon the ability of our cities to coöperate in every way possible in these efforts. Any restrictions upon the capacities of American cities in this grave emergency represent a danger to the republic and a threat to the very concept of effective democratic action.

Home rule in 1941 is more than a phrase. It is, and it can be, a powerful instrument of national policy. Upon whether we use or continue to ignore this instrument may depend the future of American cities.

[2]For a discussion of this pamphlet, see p. 606 this issue.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—A second article by Mr. Hodes on municipal home rule will appear in our December issue.